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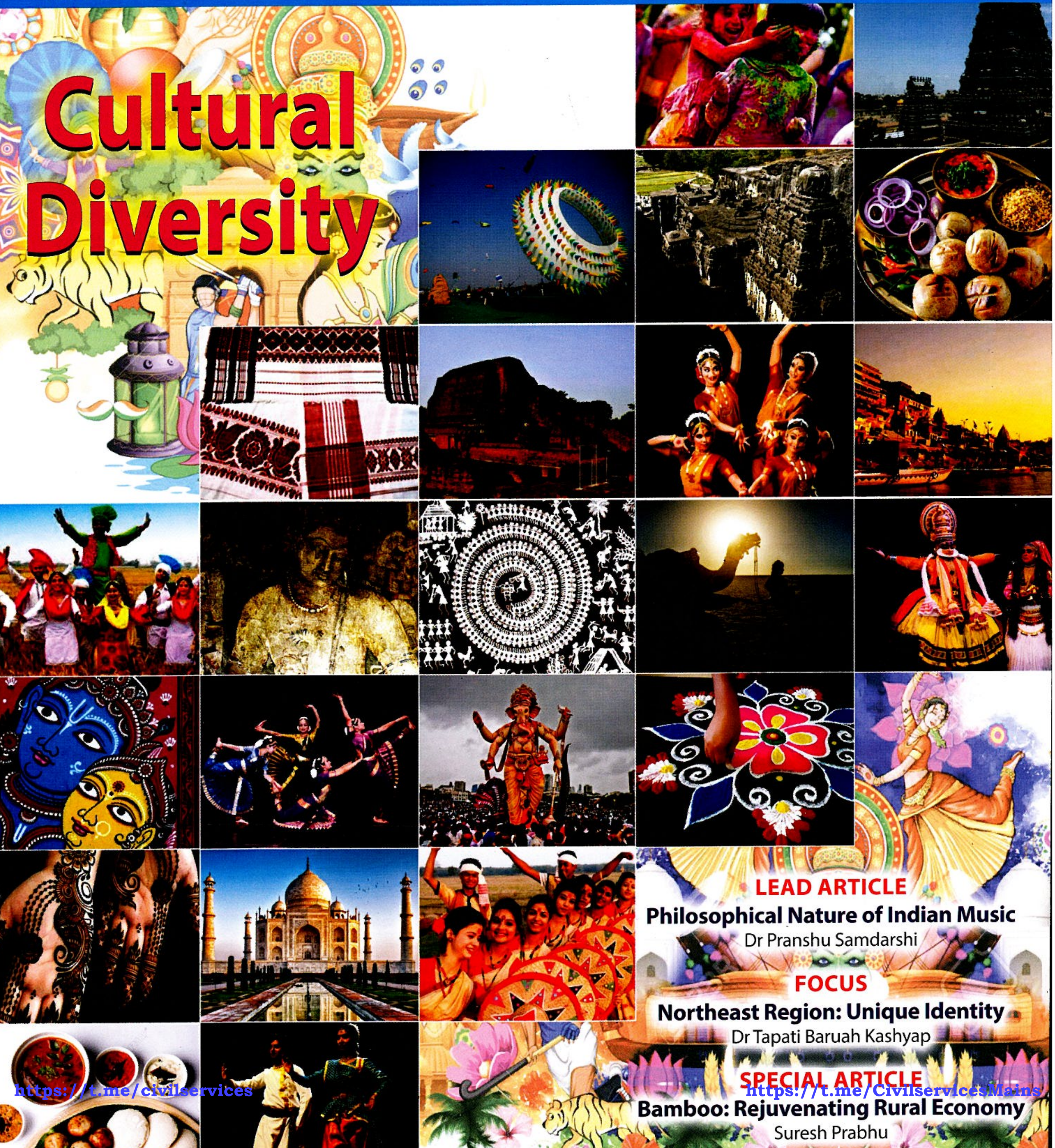
YOJANA

AUGUST 2020
A DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY
₹ 22



Cultural Diversity

LEAD ARTICLE

Philosophical Nature of Indian Music

Dr Pranshu Samdarshi

FOCUS

Northeast Region: Unique Identity

Dr Tapati Baruah Kashyap

SPECIAL ARTICLE

Bamboo: Rejuvenating Rural Economy

Suresh Prabhu

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TECHNOLOGY
Self-Reliant India

I read Yojana magazine and found the articles well-researched and educative. My best wishes for the future issues.

– **Arundhaty Ghosh**
DG (Postal Services), Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, GoI

Promoting Languages/Linguistics

Yojana has been an authentic magazine for national issues and it covers relevant and timely debates. There is no coverage for Indian linguistic issues in any mainstream magazines, while many national and international programs are being run in academia. UNESCO has alarmed us for our endangered languages with declaring 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. I would like to request you to bring one volume on Indian languages and language policy to examine and highlight our linguistic issues widely in order to preserve and promote our languages.

– **Arimardan Kumar Tripathi**
Birbhum, West Bengal

Suggestion on Theme

I am an aficionado and a regular reader of your esteemed magazine as I am preparing for civil services. This magazine helps me a lot in providing lucid yet inevitable information. I would like Yojana team to prepare a special issue on Polity and Governance as the political fluctuations keep happening in India.

– **Nivea Jain**
niveajain1992@gmail.com

India's Internal Security

I am a passionate reader of Yojana (English) and will always be thankful to Yojana which give me complete and authentic knowledge about the concerned topic. I request you to please cover topics such as "India's Internal Security, Neighbours and Border Issues". My heartfelt gratitude to Yojana team.

– **Shahzeb**
Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh
sheikhshahzeb6992@gmail.com

Research-worthy Issue

It's a wonderful idea of publishing e-Yojana magazine during this pandemic situation. Being a Research fellow, I easily get information on various subjects on this platform; that helps in my research work. Thanks to Publications Division for providing reliable studies and data.

– **Abhishek Kumar**
abhishekbhu008@gmail.com

Analysis of Articles

It is an outstanding moment for me, to write my feedback/opinion to the one of the elite magazine of the civil service aspirant. I have been reading Yojana since two years, and it has seemingly improved my knowledge. I respectfully urge Team Yojana, to add the analytical part of the topics in every article. It would give boost to the knowledge of students.

– **Jitendra Kumar**
jk470239@gmail.com

Topics for the forthcoming issues

Every edition of this enlightened magazine extends my horizon of knowledge. I would like to suggest your hardworking team several important issues such as organic agriculture and its impact, PRI and its impact on "women political empowerment", pros and cons of "economic reform policy, an analytical study" and "An assessment of Indian foreign policy". I am sure if these issues are carried out, it will be very knowledgeable for the readers.

– **Mithalal Meena**
Jaipur, Rajasthan.
mithalalmeena7@gmail.com

Government Initiatives

I would like to thank Yojana team, who really work hard to provide relevant information to us. I request you to publish articles on, 'The Economic Package under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan (All 5 Trench) & how this package provide benefits to MSME, Farmers, Traders, Common man', 'The plight of migrants in India & various laws protecting their rights', and 'The increase in domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on women's health'.

– **Manish Kumar Maurya**
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mkigl1996@gmail.com

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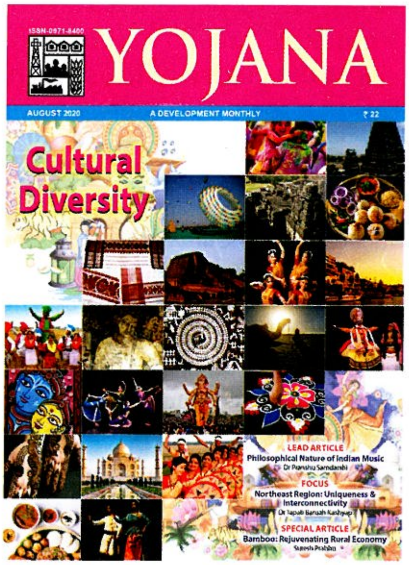
Connecting Cultures

> ***"A true happiness in this world is the right terrestrial aim of man, and true happiness lies in the finding and maintenance of natural harmony of spirit, mind and body. A culture is to be valued to the extent to which it has discovered the right key to this harmony and organised its expressive motives and movements."***
>
> ***– Sri Aurobindo in 'The Foundations of Indian Culture'***

Art and culture is the feast for our senses. Artistic expressions have the potential to lead us to a plane which is beyond the usual, mundane life, and is sometimes transcendental. When believers choose one art form or the other to sing, dance, design or perform to praise the Almighty and its creation, it is the spiritual connect that art and culture provides them. When artists immerse themselves in one of its form, the connection they feel with something larger than life and the experience they provide to the audience is mesmerising for this very nature of the art.

The fabric of Indian society is woven with its various dance forms, music, architecture, festivals, visual and performing arts, folklore and traditions. They hold together the collective identity of the society. They connect people through various art forms as one cultural identity.

The age-old line, *Kos Kos Par Pani Badle, Char Kos Pe Vani*, reflects the similar diversity found in terms of linguistic patterns that flow across the country like the flow of rivers. With centuries of historical evolution, our culture has enriched even further imbibing and assimilating the best of all, and creating its own stream of composite culture. With incredible multiplicity comes unique stories–Stories that shape the people, their lifestyle, their festivities and art forms. These stories have their own intersections with various regions. Tales of Ramayana and Mahabharata are used in different art forms from east to far south, from shadow puppets to performing arts. India has myriad expressions in form of oral traditions and expressions, and performing arts. Social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and traditional craftsmanship, all form a long list of our intangible heritage.



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Northeast Region: Uniqueness & Interconnectivity

SPECIAL ARTICLE
Bamboo: Rejuvenating Rural Economy

This issue of Yojana celebrates the idea of India as a nation wherein different cultures unite across varied geographies, coalesce and interact with each other. This glorious manifestation of diverse cuisine, music, dance, theatre, movies & films, handicrafts, sports, literature, festivals, painting, sculpture etc., enables people to imbibe the innate chord of binding and oneness. I would end this piece with a humble submission that a journal with limited pages can never do justice to a subject as vast and diverse like Indian culture. With all the omissions and commissions, this issue is an attempt to bring out a kaleidoscope of our rich culture, heritage, traditions and the points of interconnections among them. After all, the culture is made by its people and it is the people who pass it on to generations to come.

The success of this issue of Yojana lies in the fact that this would bring to our readers beautifully-crafted articles on states and culture far away from their own, and give them an opportunity to learn something new out of it, and connect with their own people even better. ☐

Philosophical Nature of Indian Music

Dr Pranshu Samdarshi

Indian classical music has contributed in a significant way towards the development of the composite culture of India. Besides, with regards to Indian classical music, it should be noted that the term 'classical' only suggests that it has its foundations in the standard convention or *shāstra,* in accordance with the textual tradition. The Indian name for this music is ShāstriyaSangīt. It is sometimes also known as Rāga Sangīt since it is the Rāga that is at the centre of the structure of this art form. Thus, the term 'classical' doesn't connote any old style or a specific time period, as the way it exists in the Western tradition.

The Indian classical music, be it Hindustani or Carnatic, has essentially got a spiritual component inherent in it. This music intends to give an elevating experience which transports its listeners to an abstract and sublime domain. Although, many great traditions of music across the globe have a direct or indirect connection with some sort of spirituality, nevertheless, Indian classical music lays upon it a very special emphasis.

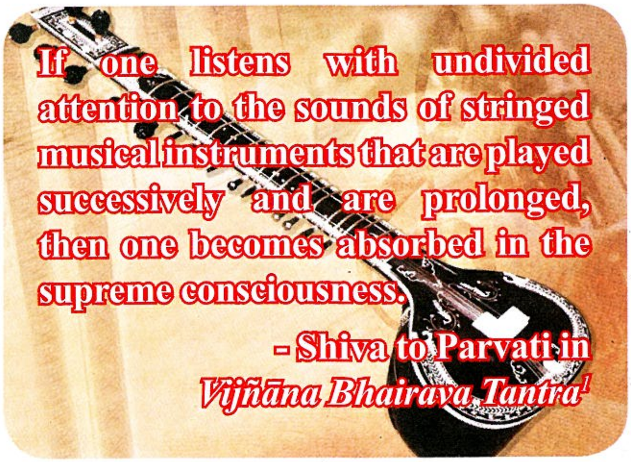
Tracing down the history of Indian music, one would find that since ancient times, temples have been providing a platform for many diverse forms of the artistic expressions of Classical music. And, it was *Bhakti* or selfless devotion that was the underlying essence of the various art forms that developed in India. The artistic principles of Indian classical music are formulated and structured in such a way that it becomes an inward journey for its practitioners so that they get intimately connected with their within. This is one of the reasons why the word "spiritual" is frequently used in describing Indian classical music.

Indian classical music has emerged from a mythical or legendary past that was before recorded history. We can agree that legends are not exact facts, we also know that this does not mean that they cannot be real at some other level. The reality can manifest itself in the inner experience. Musicians with a profound understanding of Indian heritage, its associated symbols, and myths, use the structure of the music and the words of the composition that are often rooted in mythology, to move into the abstract, subtle, inspiring, and mystical domains.

Nādopāsanā - The Invocation of the Primordial Sound

For a true practitioner of classical music, the approach used to be *Nādopāsanā* - the invocation of the primordial sound. For these practitioners, music became an internal journey for the realisation of the ultimate truth. Such practitioners of classical music tried not to sing or play for the audience. Even when they were giving a public performance, they got elevated to the very high points within themselves which consequently uplifted the audience taking them into the domains that they never experienced before. Thus, the performer as well as the audience, both experienced the true *rasa* of classical music.

For these practitioners of music, even the selection of the Rāga and the composition at the time of a performance was a result of the intuition and the inspiration of the moment. For example, it is said that the late Dhrupad



If one listens with undivided attention to the sounds of stringed musical instruments that are played successively and are prolonged, then one becomes absorbed in the supreme consciousness.

- Shiva to Parvati in *Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra*[1]

The author is former National Secretary of SPIC MACAY and Assistant Professor at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Bengaluru. Email: praanshu@gmail.com

Bharat Ratna Qamruddin 'Bismillah' Khan

Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia

exponent Ustad Nasir Aminuddin Dagar, before going to a SPIC MACAY programme, was once asked what Rāga he had decided to sing. He is reported to have replied, "the tanpura will tell me which raga I have to sing". That is why so much time was spent with Tanpura in the greenroom. This might sound strange these days but it has been a reality for many great masters of Indian classical music.

Thus, for such practitioners of music, their art form was not to provide mere entertainment but it became a medium to pass on their profound experiences to the listeners.

The Guru-Shishya and Gharānā tradition

The Guru-Shishya *parampara* is another crucial feature which is common for all the classical music traditions of India. For centuries, this Guru-shishya transmission has made it possible to carry forward the intense experiences innately embedded in this great tradition of enlightened practitioners of music. A great Guru is the amalgamation of thousands of years of wisdom. It requires a lot of sacrifice, tremendous staying power, and faith on the part of the disciples to take in what a Guru can pass onto them. For this to take place, it has to be a sacred relationship of respect and unconditional obedience, which has been the guiding force in every branch of learning in traditional India. Also, there is a commonality in the approach of the great gurus of different art forms andif the disciple is a real seeker, the journey along with guru would be through the greatest nuances of the art form and the beyond.

> **We adore that *Nāda Brahman*, that essence of delight manifests as primordial sound, that nondual, who is the conscious core of all created things, who has brought forth the world out of its own very Self.**
>
> **- Sarangdev in *Sangeet Ratnākar*, 13th Century CE**[2]

The musical gharanas of north Indian or Hindustani classical music have also contributed to the diversity of their form of music by presenting a distinct style of it. These Gharānās or the 'households' of specific styles of music have preserved and distilled the unique principles of Rāgas through Guru-shishya lineage.

The Origin and Historical Development of Different Forms of Indian Music

The origin of Indian music can be traced back to the chanting of Vedic hymns and *mantras*. The Chāndogya Upanishad talks about the seven styles of *gāna* (musical modes), highlighting the importance of *Svara* (phonemes) of a Vedic *mantra* that should be pronounced with absolute accuracy. The impact will only be then felt.[3] This Upanishad further states that the innermost self (*ātman*) of all *svara* is the chief Vedic God Indra.[4]

In the post-Vedic age came the NāṭyaŚāstra, one of the ancient most compendium on Indian art forms. It was compiled between 200 BCE to 200 CE. It is said that NāṭyaŚāstra author, the sage Bharata Muni, created the Nātya (theatre) by integrating speech from the Ṛig Veda, music from the Sāma Veda, acting from the Yajur Veda, and emotions from the Atharva Veda. This further contributed to the tradition of Gandharva Veda - the Vedic science of music.

Another distinction, concerning the ritualized chanting of Vedas and the singing style of performing arts that might have existed around the 10th Century CE is noted by Acharya Abhinavagupta of Kashmir. He mentions

the difference between the religious Gāndharva and the universal Dhruva-gāna.

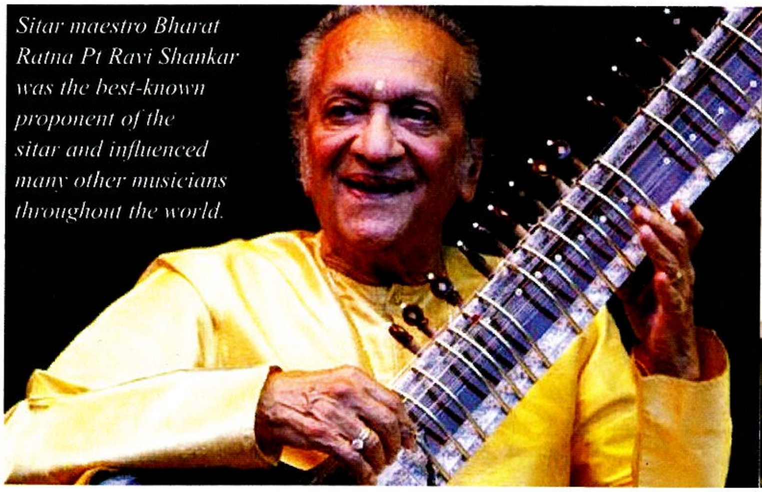
One of the earliest references of Rāgas used in the Indian classical music can be found in the Buddhist textual sources. The 10th century manuscript of CharyāGītī (performance-songs) obtained from Tibet, is attributed to the 8th century CE Mahasiddhas Sarahapa. In this text, we find the mention of classical music Rāgas such as Bhairavi and Gurjari.[5] In various parts of the Himalayan region of India and Nepal, where Mahayana-Vajrayana Buddhism is prevalent, the recitation and performance of texts of Charyā Gītī and Nritya are still being practised.

In the southern part of India, Prabandha-gāna was the popular performing genre that existed between the 11th to 16th centuries. The word Prabandha, connotes a well-bound composition. Each Prabandha, it is said, was exhaustive and would take several years to master. It was the Prabandha tradition that gradually influenced the emergence of two associated, yet distinctive, styles of classical music that are now known as Hindustani and Carnatic music.

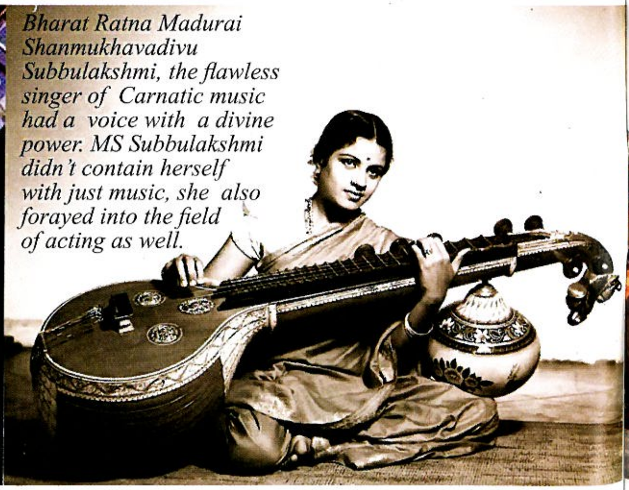
In the northeastern region of India, with the efforts of 15th–16th century saint-scholar of the Vaishnava tradition, Srimanta Sankardev, a figure of importance in the cultural and religious history of Assam, a cultural reformation took place and the traditions of the past were revived. He devised new forms of music (Borgeet), and dance (Sattriya). These classical musical and dance traditions helped in consolidating the Indian cultural contact with its northeastern region even further. Moreover, the Vaishnava tradition of the northeast further refined the performances of Bengali devotional music.

Sikhism is perhaps the only religion that uses music as its chief mode of worship, where poetic teachings of Gurus, composed in classical music, are used as prayer and offering. Using different styles, the Sikh Kirtans are rendered in the Rāga and Tāla of Indian classical music. This music is used as a direct means for formal worship. In the Guru Granth Sahib, the notation of thirty-one Rāgas of Classical music has been supplied with necessary particulars.

There is a popular perception that music is forbidden in Islam. However, this prohibition of music in Islam is contextual. The prohibition is applicable only when the music is associated with the worldly temptation and it becomes an obstacle to meditate upon the transcendental reality of Allah. Nevertheless, music has been honoured and incorporated in dervish dances or qawwali singing by the Sufi mystics for triggering their consciousness to its union with the divine supreme.



Sitar maestro Bharat Ratna Pt Ravi Shankar was the best-known proponent of the sitar and influenced many other musicians throughout the world.



Bharat Ratna Madurai Shanmukhavadivu Subbulakshmi, the flawless singer of Carnatic music had a voice with a divine power. MS Subbulakshmi didn't contain herself with just music, she also forayed into the field of acting as well.

Thus, Indian classical music has contributed in a significant way towards the development of the composite culture of India. Besides, with regards to Indian classical music, it should be noted that the term 'classical' only suggests that it has its foundations in the standard convention or *shāstra,* in accordance with the textual tradition. The Indian name for this music is ShāstriyaSangīt. It is sometimes also known as RāgaSangīt since it is the Rāga that is at the centre of the structure of this art form. Thus, the term 'classical' doesn't connote any old style or a specific time period, as the way it exists in the Western tradition.

Embracing Pluralism and Particularism

Though spirituality has been the unifying factor for different disciplines of Indian classical music, India is endowed with a rich and diverse musical heritage. Its musical diversity is also marked by its geography and culture. Another reason behind this diversity amongst different forms of musical traditions can be attributed to the uniqueness of ethnicity across Indian subcontinent. The ancient text Nāṭyashāstra has recorded this distinctness and categorised these traditions giving them a geographical or ethnic label. In the Nāṭyashāstra, the musical style of northern India is mentioned as 'Udīchya' while the musical style that was prevalent in the deccan region is recorded as the Āndhriya. Thus, there exists a socio-cultural context for the diversity of Indian classical music.

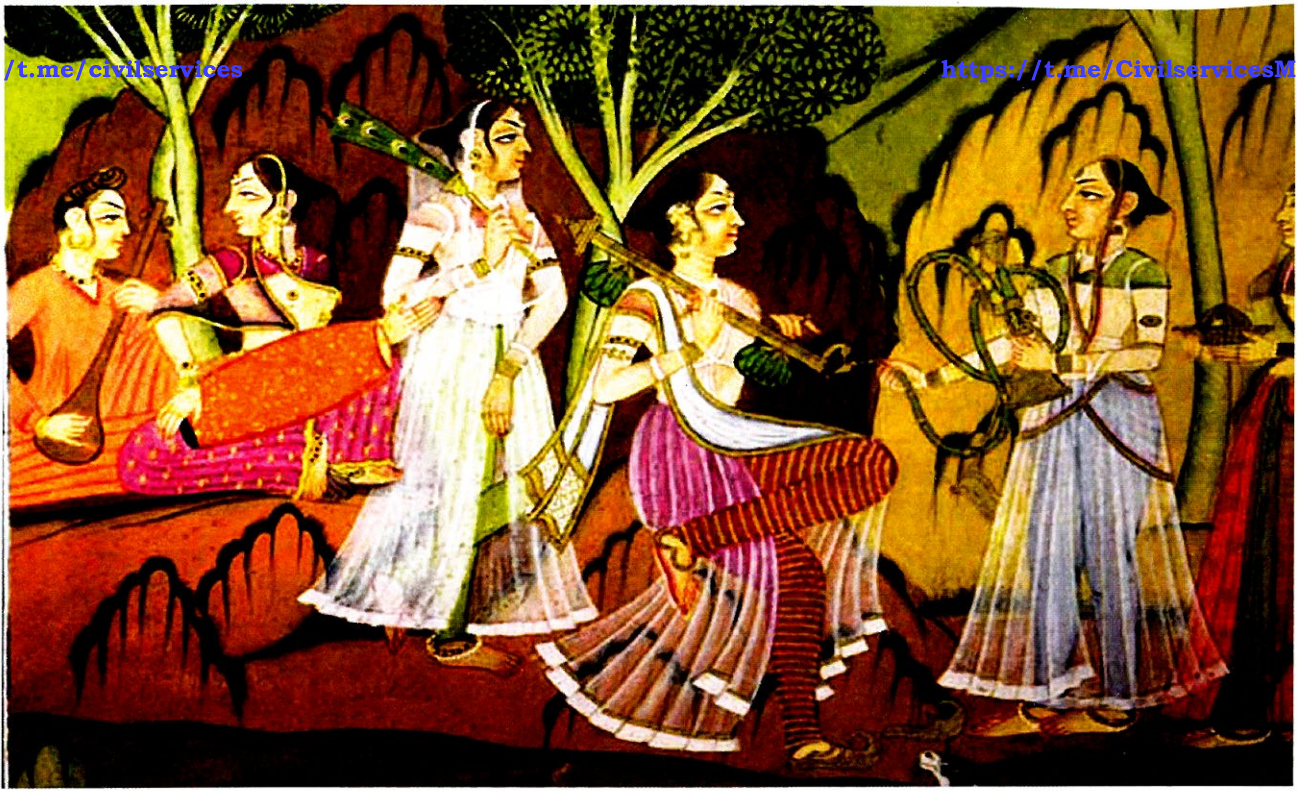
The Emergence of Khayāl Music

The development of Khayāl style of Hindustani music appears around the time period of the 17th century CE. Historically, its popularity coincided with the breaking down of the Mughal empire and the rise of *rītī* (romantic) poetry of Hindi literature. The Khayāl style, which was an offshoot of its precursor classical music form called Dhrupad, particularly suited to the courtesans who preserved and served the classical music and dance to their customers in a rather mundane context. This was the time when the Dhrupad musical repertories, may have been transformed through radical changes in style, tempo, function, and ideology.

Majority of Khayāl artists were Muslims and much of its technical vocabulary is derived from Urdu. Although, Khayāl has been developed as a structured and systematic form of classical musical tradition, yet most of its terminologies come from the vernacular languages.

Rāgamālā: Visual Art and Classical Music

A typical example of the amalgamation of Indian classical music with visual art and poetry was the



A painting depicting characters playing various music instruments

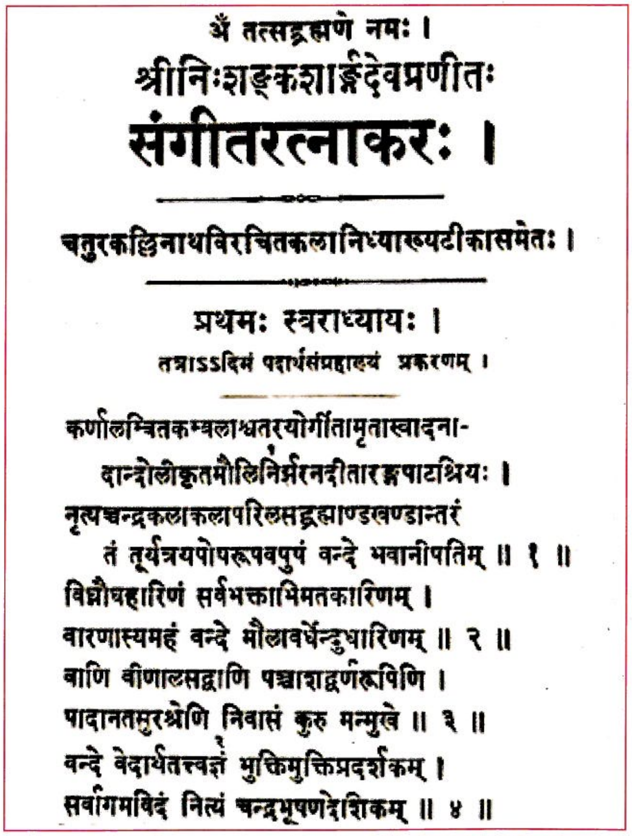
evolution of Rāgamālā ('garlands of musical modes') painting series of medieval India. It was a form of Indian miniature painting that depicted various Indian musical modes or Rāgas. Although, there exists some arbitrariness in the scenes of these paintings, as their depiction and the colourful palette may not match with the prescribed colour of a Rāga, the way they are mentioned in the canonical texts of music, yet these paintings are considered to be an indulgent imagination and testimony of creativity of the Indian artistic tradition.

The Purity of Svara: Unifying Factor of Indian Classical Music

Another unifying factor of different forms of Indian classical music is the emphasis on the purity of Svara (musical note). The text Sangeet Ratnakar gives the etymological meaning of Svara as- *swayamevaranjaytiitiswara*. The term "*Sva*" stands for 'self', and "*Ra*", stands for 'shining forth'. So, the *atman* or Self is expected to shine through the Svara. The great Dhrupad maestro, Ustad Rahimuddhin Khan Dagar famously said, '*SwarusikāsacchhājiskāImānscchā'* (if you are truthful then only you will get true Swara).

There is a lovely story on the purity of Swara. It was revealed by one of the greatest exponents of Hindustani music of our times, Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar.[6]

Once, while wandering in the jungles close to Indore, Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar heard a Sanyasi



ॐ तत्सद्ब्रह्मणे नमः ।
श्रीनिःशङ्कशार्ङ्गदेवप्रणीतः
संगीतरत्नाकरः ।

चतुरकल्लिनाथविरचितकलानिध्याख्यटीकासमेतः ।

प्रथमः स्वराध्यायः ।
तत्राऽऽदिमं पदार्थसंग्रहाख्यं प्रकरणम् ।

कर्णालम्बितकम्बलाश्वतरयोर्गीतामृतास्वादना-
दान्दोलीकृतमौलिनिर्झरनदीतारङ्गपाटश्रियः ।
नृत्यच्चन्द्रकलाकलापरिलसद्ब्रह्माण्डखण्डान्तरं
तं तूर्यत्रयपोषरूपवपुषं वन्दे भवानीपतिम् ॥ १ ॥
विघ्नौघहारिणं सर्वभक्ताभिमतकारिणम् ।
वारणास्यमहं वन्दे मौलावर्धेन्दुधारिणम् ॥ २ ॥
वाणि वीणालसद्वाणि पञ्चाशद्वर्णरूपिणि ।
पादानतसुरश्रेणि निवासं कुरु मन्मुखे ॥ ३ ॥
वन्दे वेदार्थतत्त्वज्ञं भुक्तिमुक्तिप्रदर्शकम् ।
सर्वागमविदं नित्यं चन्द्रभूषणदेशिकम् ॥ ४ ॥

Manuscript of Sangeet Ratnakar granth in Sanskrit. This granth is the basis of Northern as well as Southern Indian music methodology. It was written by Pt. Sharangdev in 13th century.

singing in a temple in ruins. He was awestruck by the intensity of the voice; he also saw this miracle that the ruined temple was sparkling like ablaze. Profoundly moved and shaken by this experience, he asked the Sanyasi whether he could learn this intense form of singing and whether the Sanyasi would accept him as a disciple. Seeing the Sanyasi's reluctance, Panditji said that he was ready to quit everything, and even wanted to become a Sanyasi, if that would lead him to get such power in his singing. "No", answered the Sanyasi, "it is when you get this quality in your Svara that you will have already become a Sanyasi". It isn't by turning into a Sanyasi that one can procure profound force and power in the Svara.

As one gets connected with the within using the Svaraas a means, the Self begins to shine through the music. It is the pure Svara of a practitioner that makes the music significant.

30
पै.P.
1872 - 1931
V.D.PALUSKAR
विष्णु दिगम्बर पलुस्कर
भारत INDIA

Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar was a Hindustani musician. He sang the original version of the bhajan Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram, and founded the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in 1901.

Conclusion

Thus, we can observe that the specific cultural forms and historical traditions have contributed to the emergence of epistemological diversity of Indian music. This has resulted in the development of distinctive world-views that outline the cultural framework and assumptions behind the production of Indian classical music. It is also reflected that spirituality has constantly remained the underlying core principle of this music. Moreover, we also need to be a true seeker with some amount of faith and patience so that we can have some glimpses of the heights to which Indian classical music can take us to. ❑

Allauddin Khan, also known as Baba Allauddin Khan (8 October 1862 – 6 September 1972) was a Bengali Indian Sarod player and multi-instrumentalist, composer and one of the most notable music teachers of the 20th century in Indian classical music.

Endnotes

1. Dhāraṇa 18, Verse 41 *VijñānaBhairava Tantra* states *Tantryādi vādyaśabdeaudirgheşukramasamsthiteh/Ananyacetāapratyant eparavyomavapurbhavet.* The renowned musicologist, Thakur Jaideva Singh comments on this verse, "When the struck sound of instrumental music stops, it still vibrates in the memory. If the yogi does not allow his mind to wander to something else, but concentrate on the echo of the music, he will be absorbed in the source of all sound, viz; parāvāk and thus will acquire the nature of Bhairava". See, Jaideva Singh. 2010. Vijnanabhairava or Divine Consciousness.
2. *Caitanyaasarvabhūtānāavivataajagadātmā/nādabrahmatadānand amadvitīyamupāsmahe,* see, *Sangeet Ratnakar*, 1.3.1. p.62.
3. A phoneme is a unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another in a particular language.
4. *Chāndogya Upanishad* 2.23.3-4. See, Andre Padoux. 1990. Vac: The concept of word, p. 17.
5. Scholars such as Rahul Sankriyayana dated this text to be composed in the 8th century CE.
6. See, Alaap: A Discovery of Indian Classical Music, pp.34-35.

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1. Padoux, Andre. 1990. *Vac: The concept of word.* New York: State University of New York Press.
2. *Sangeet Ratnakar of Sarangdev*. 1940.. Madras: Adyar Library.
3. Singh, Jaideva. 2010. *Vijnana Bhairava or Divine Consciousness.* Delhi: MLBD Publications.
4. Society, Sri Aurobindo. 2002. *Alaap: A Discovery Of Indian Classical Music.* Mumbai: Bennett Coleman.

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Northeast Region: Unique Identity

Dr Tapati Baruah Kashyap

> **"A hundred of them, flowing down speedily, through mountains and valleys, with tremendous speed, smashing all barriers, to become one" (in the mighty Brahmaputra).**
>
> ***– Jyotiprasad Agarwala (1943) equated each community of the Northeast to a mountain stream.***

India's Northeastern region has a long and glorious history. Earliest human footprints here have been traced back to the early Stone Age or Palaeolithic Age (between 40,000 and 35,000 years ago). It has been home to people belonging to various human races, with ethnologists pointing at the presence of traces of Negritos too, apart from prominent existence of people of pre-Dravidian, Eurasian, Austroloid, Mongoloid, Alpine or Armenoid, Mediterranean, Indo-Aryan and Irano-Scythian stocks. Various places of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur in particular, on the other hand, figure prominently in the epic lores of this country.

In present times, the 4.54 crore population (2011 Census) inhabiting this enchanting region, all progenies of wave after wave of diverse human races, have made it the most colourful mosaic of ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity. The people of the region can be divided into three broad groups from the ethnological point

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of view–hill tribes, plain tribes and non-tribals of the plains.

Over 68 per cent of the region's population live in Assam alone. The population varies from as low as 43 per sq km in Arunachal Pradesh to 398 per sq km in Assam, the latter being more than the national average of 382. Barring Assam, all the other states comprise predominantly of hilly terrain and are home to an overwhelming tribal proportion. The tribal population ranges from 12.4 per cent in Assam to 94 per cent in Mizoram. The region has over 160 Scheduled Tribes and over 400 other tribal and sub-tribal communities and groups. Over 80 per cent of the region's population live in the rural areas.

Ethnically most tribes belong to the Indo-Mongoloid racial stock, and speak languages of different divisions and subdivisions of the great Sino-Tibetan linguistic family. The Bodo, Rabha, Dimasa and Karbi languages of Assam, Garo of Meghalaya, Kokborok of Tripura, and most languages spoken in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and the hills of Manipur belong to the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan group. Assamese on the other hand belong to the neo Indo-Aryan family, while Khasi is a Mon-Khmer (Austro-Asiatic) language spoken in Meghalaya. Practically most languages and dialects spoken across the region, barring Sikkim, belong to the Tibeto-Burman group. Nepali, Bhotia and Lepcha are the three major languages in Sikkim, which is ethnically different from the other Northeastern states.

On the religious front, a sizeable majority of tribal communities in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur have in the past 200 years embraced Christianity by leaving behind their respective traditional faiths of nature worship. Majority of people in Assam, Tripura and the Imphal Valley of Manipur on the other hand subscribe to different forms of Hinduism, among which

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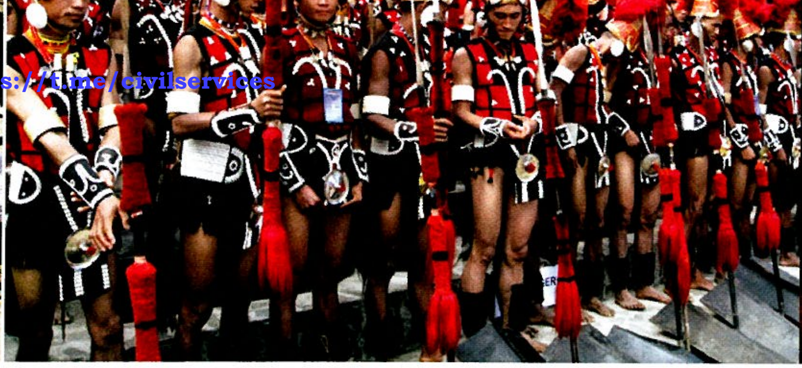
Songs of Shaman – Arunachal Pradesh

Shamanism is prevalent among different tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. Every tribe in Arunachal Pradesh has its own kind of ritual expert for performing rites and sacrifices. In almost all the previous writings, the term (indigenous) priest or shaman is used for them. Tani people who trace their ancestry to Abo Tani, believe that antiquity of Shamanism is as old as the emergence of humankind. In Arunachal Pradesh among different tribes, Shaman is mostly seen as a diviner, communicator, negotiator, healer, ritual specialist, and religious expert but neither as a magician nor a mystic. S/he is the middleman between human and spirits who can communicate with the spirits on their behalf. As Tani people believe in the existence of spirits, they need human specialists, a shaman, who have experience and can get access to the spirit world as a communicator. Each clan has important religious specialists who initiate and foster contact with the spirits and divinities. They will contact the spirits and convey the messages between human and spirits. They are said to have the power to call the spirits for blessings, support and protection against evil and to enter into the spirit world and to communicate and negotiate with them that cause people to become sick. They are believed to enter into a dialogue with the spirits and ask for prosperity and health of the members of the clan. Shamans are also the storehouse of traditional knowledge in the form of legends, myths, ritual incantations etc. They are well-versed in ritual performances and knowledge and wisdom associated with it.



Vaishnavism is the most prominent in Assam and Manipur. Among major indigenous faiths are Donyi-Polo in Arunachal Pradesh and Niam-tre in Meghalaya. Arunachal Pradesh also has a significant presence of Buddhism; the Monpa, Sherdukpen, Memba and Khamba tribes follow the Mahayana school, while the Khamti, Singpho and Tangsa tribes follow the Theravada school.

Wealthy in culture, most communities of the Northeast have a rich tradition of oral literature, folk songs, music and dance forms. These are generally related to various agricultural practices; which was for long in the *jhum* or slash-and-burn method. Most festivals were thus connected to clearing jungles for *jhum*, tilling the soil, sowing of seeds and harvesting. Since traditionally agriculture has been a collective community activity, the festivals are also celebrated at the community level.

Bihu, the most popular festival in Assam, has its roots in agrarian practices of ancient times. Thus, while *Bhogali Bihu* is celebration of the harvest, *Rongali Bihu* is about the New Year. Assam also observes *Kongali Bihu*–which comprises of a solemn prayer for a good crop. While the Bodos call their New Year festival *Baisagu*, the Dimasas call it *Busu*, the Karbis call it *Rongker*, the Mishings call it *Ali-aye-Lrigang*, and the Rabhas call it *Baikho*.

In Meghalaya, the Khasis celebrate *Shad Suk Mynsiem*, the Jaintias celebrate *Behdeinkham* and the Garos *Wangala*. In Mizoram on the other hand, all three festivals–*Chapchar Kut*, *Mim Kut* and *Pawl Kut*–are related to agriculture, during which the Mizos perform *Cheraw*, the amazing bamboo dance. In Arunachal Pradesh on the other hand, the Adi community celebrates *Solung*, the Apatanis celebrate *Dree*, the Niyishis celebrate *Nokyum*, the Galos celebrate *Mopin* and the Monpas celebrate

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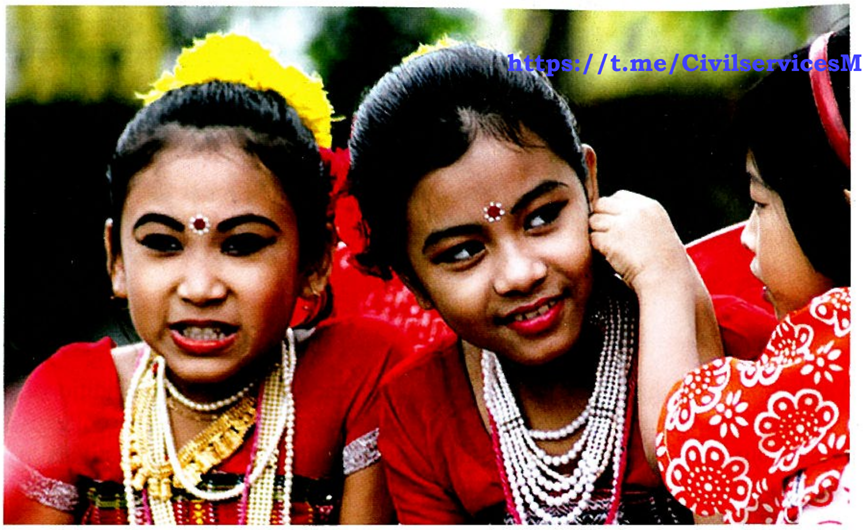
Sowa-Rigpa (Knowledge of Healing or Science of Healing)

The term Sowa-Rigpa is derived from Bhoti language which means 'Knowledge of Healing'. It is an ancient Indian medical system concieved and propounded by Lord Buddha in India and later was enriched in the entire Trans-Himalayan region. Sowa-Rigpa has been developed and incorporated into different environmental and cultural contexts through the centuries. (Sowa-Rigpa has moulded itself into the socio-cultural lineage since ages), where every village has had an Amchi family to look after public health. Today, Sowa-Rigpa is acknowledged as a traditional medical system by the governments of India, Bhutan, Mongolia and Tibet. The principle medical text "rGyud-bZi" (Chatush Tantra-a texbook of fundmental principles of Sowa-Rigpa in Sanskrit language) was pioneered by Lord Buddha and translated into Bhoti language around 8th-12th Century and amended by Yuthok Yontan Gombo and other scholars of Trans Himalayan region according to the socio-climatic conditions. The fundamental principles of Sowa-Rigpa is based on Jung-wa-nga (Panchmahabutha), Nespa-sum (Tridosha), Luszung-dun(Saptadhatu) etc. According to Sowa-Rigpa health is an equation of balance of tridosha and five cosmophysical energies (Panchmahabuta), balance within the body, balance with the enviornment, and with the Universe. Pulse examination and astrological evaluation/analysis of an individual are the unique diagnostic tools in Sowa-Rigpa. The natural resources which are safe, effective and time-tested are used as the sources of medication.

Losar–all related to agriculture. Some festivals of Nagaland tribe-wise are–*Sekrenyi* (Angami), *Aoling Monyu* (Konyak), *Moatsu* (Ao), *Tuluni* (Sema), *Tokhu Emong* (Lotha) and *Amongmong* (Sangtam).

In Manipur, while *Cheiraoba* is the Manipuri New Year festival, *Lai-Haraoba* is celebrated to appease the sylvan deity called *Umanglai*, *Yaoshang* is the wonderful week-long Holi festival and Rath Yatra, also called *Kang Chingba*, is a nine-day chariot festival dedicated to Lord Jagannath. Among the tribal communities in Manipur on the other hand, major festivals include *Chavang-Kut* of the Kuki-Chin group, *Gang-Ngai* of the Kabuis, and *Chumpha* and *Lui-Ngai-Ni* of the Tangkhuls.



Two of the dance forms of the Northeast–*Manipuri* of Manipur and *Satriya* of Assam–on the other hand have been recognised as "classical dance forms" of the country. Introduced in the 15th century AD by the famous Assamese saint-reformer Sankaradeva, the *Satriya* dance is governed by strictly laid down principles in respect of *hasta-mudras*, footworks, *aharya*s, music etc. The *Satriya* dance is primarily preserved and propagated by the several *Satra* or Vaishnavite monasteries located in Majuli, the largest inhabited river-island of the world. Manipuri dance, which had developed in the 15th century over the ancient dance traditions of Manipur, has a large repertoire, the most popular forms being *Raas*, *Sankirtana* and *Thang-Ta*.

While discussing the cultural heritage and diversity of the Northeastern region, one must also touch upon the rich handloom heritage of the communities residing here. Womenfolk of each community are expert weavers, while the men have amazing skills of working on bamboo and cane. Hand-weaving has been a tradition for every community living in the region from time immemorial. Weaving in fact is a part of socio-cultural tradition of the diverse communities, whether in the lofty heights of the Eastern Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh, or down south in the Mizo Hills that form part of the Arakan Yoma mountain system and shares boundary with Myanmar on one side and Bangladesh on the other. Unique in their own way, each tribe or community has a rich legacy of unrivalled craftsmanship. The traditional skill of handloom weaving is not just a status symbol for women in the region, but is also inseparable part of the socio-economic and cultural life of the different communities.

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Rongkhli - Meghalaya

Rongkhli or 'Tiger Festival' is a religious festival celebrated by the people of Nongtalang village in the War-Jaintia region of Meghalaya. The War-Jaintias lives on the slopes of the west Jaintia hills district bordering Bangladesh. Like all other sub-tribes of the Khasis, the War-Jaintias too believe that they came to this earth from the sky through a golden ladder that was located at one point of time at Sohpetbneng mountain top in the northern part of the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya. Rong means festival and Khli means tiger, in the local dialect, hence Rongkhli means Tiger Festival. Tradition has it that whenever any person from the village catches a tiger or its feline like, rituals have to be performed. The people of Nongtalang worship two goddesses namely; Ka Pyrtuh and Ka Kapong. The Dorbar is then summoned by the Chief of the village and a date is decided for the Festival. The festival is mainly held in the month of January to March.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Chokri Naga Folk Songs - Nagaland

The Chokri community is a sub community under the tribe Chakesang (Naga). Chakhesang tribe as a whole have a Chakesang cultural research center situated at Chethba town in Phek district. They cherish the folk song culture as their proud heritage, which forms as part of every walk of life-work, celebration, dances, folk media, war cry, solo, duet, trio and many such possibilities. In the absence of literary script and the medium being oral, the practitioners sing by memory.

In Assam, which has the highest number of handlooms in the country, the non-tribal communities use the traditional throw-shuttle loom in the household set-up, with the fly-shuttle being used only in the commercial looms of Sualkuchi, the famous silk village near Guwahati. Assam's traditional handloom industry has been basically silk-oriented, because the state is also home to the unique *muga* or golden silk–a variety of wild silk geographically tagged to Assam. Known for its extreme durability, *muga* silk has a natural yellowish-golden tint with a shimmering, glossy texture. A traditional art practiced by women as a hobby of finesse, Assam's handloom had, a hundred years ago, charmed none other than Mahatma Gandhi. He, during his maiden visit to Assam in 1921 was so impressed by a group of women working on their looms that he wrote: "Every woman in Assam is a born weaver; and she weaves fairy tales on her loom."

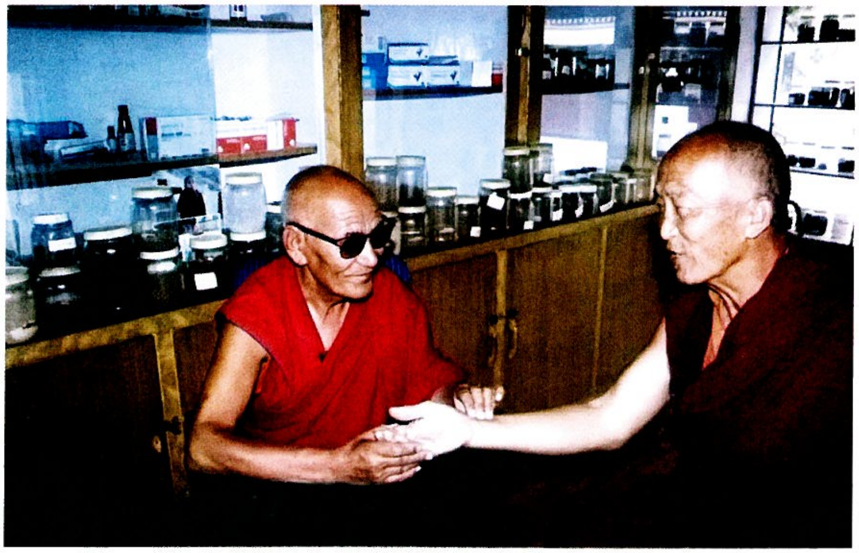
In Assam, they commonly weave *mekhela-chador*, while the ceremonial set also includes a *riha*, and these could be of the golden *muga* as well as *paat* – the latter made of mulberry silk and is brilliant white or off-white in colour. Bodo tribal women of Assam weave the *dokhona* and *jwmgra* that constitute a woman's traditional dress, while the *aronai* is a beautiful scarf normally worn by men. Likewise, the most common handloom products of the Mishing tribals are *sumpa* and *galuk*, a two-piece dress for women, while Rabha women weave *khanbung* and *riphan*.

Ethnically most tribes belong to the Indo-Mongoloid racial stock, and speak languages of different divisions and subdivisions of the great Sino-Tibetan linguistic family. The Bodo, Rabha, Dimasa and Karbi languages of Assam, Garo of Meghalaya, Kokborok of Tripura, and most languages spoken in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and the hills of Manipur belong to the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan group. Assamese on the other hand belong to the neo Indo-Aryan family, while Khasi is a Mon-Khmer (Austro-Asiatic) language spoken in Meghalaya.

Unlike in the Assam plains, tribal communities in the hill states use the traditional back-strap loom or loin loom to weave their colourful fabrics. These fabrics have different colours and colour combinations, as also motifs and designs, each having a traditional and cultural significance, in some cases also the history, for every tribe or community.

In Manipur, some of the popular traditional fabrics include the *phanek* of the Meiteis, *kasan* of the Tangkhuls, and the various types of *puan* of the Paites, Vaipheis and Zous, *khamtang* of the Thadous, *punkophoi* of the Koms, and so on. In Arunachal Pradesh, Apatani women weave *bilan-abi, chinyu-abi* and *jig-jiro*, Singpho women sew *pukang*, Nyishi women weave *par-ij*, Khamti women weave *siu-pashao* and *sin*, to name a few.

Different Naga tribes weave their own traditional cloth, which often serve as signature fabrics. While they make wrappers, waistcloths, girdles, skirts, scarves and aprons out of the fabric they weave, what stands out are the male shawls which have different motifs representing different tribes. The Ao shawl is called *tsungkotepsu*, while the Angami shawl is called *loramhousho*. In Mizoram on the other hand women weave different varieties of the *puan*–a drape and



uncut rectangular cotton cloth with well-crafted edges and prominent horizontal borders, which they use as a wrap. Most prestigious among them are the *tualhlohpuan* and *punchei*.

Looking at the musical richness of the region, one would find that it is one place where almost everything is expressed through music–be that joy, sorrow, worship, celebration or even discontentment and anger. Likewise, the wide variety of musical instruments that the different communities possess–from the long *dama* of the Garos of Meghalaya (they play 100 drums in unison during the Wangala festival) to the *bhor-taal* (large brass cymbals used in Assam's Satra monasteries) to the *bengbung* of Mizoram (similar to a xylophone)–provide virgin areas for research.

What however is the beauty of the region is the underlying interconnectivity that the ethnic communities and groups maintain and enjoy among themselves despite certain sharp differences. One, the ethno-cultural boundaries of many of these communities cut across inter-state, national and even international boundaries. That many of the communities share a common root somewhere far back in history, and that such commonness often reflect in their folklore, food habits and cuisines, music, dance forms and festivals is something which bind them together as Seven Sisters (with Sikkim chipping in as the only brother) with an invisible golden thread. Intertwined with a geography of multicultural co-existence, the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution on the other hand provides them equal protection and opportunities. Common languages that have evolved in the region–like Nagamese among the 18 Naga tribes, Mizo among different tribes of the Mizo Hills, Assamese among various communities in Assam, and even Hindi among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh–also tell so many stories.

In Manipur, while Cheiraoba is the Manipuri New Year festival, Lai-Haraoba is celebrated to appease the sylvan deity called Umanglai, Yaoshang is the wonderful week-long Holi festival and Rath Yatra, also called Kang Chingba, is a nine-day chariot festival dedicated to Lord Jagannath.

To conclude, one can go back to one of the famous poems of Jyotiprasad Agarwala, the greatest cultural icon of Assam. Way back in 1943, he had equated each community of the Northeast to a mountain stream, "a hundred of them, flowing down speedily, through mountains and valleys, with tremendous speed, smashing all barriers, to become one" in the mighty Brahmaputra. For the next six decades, his greatest disciple Bhupen Hazarika, who is said to have been the first to have travelled to every nook and corner of the Northeast, sang countless songs telling stories of both hope and despair of the colourful communities of the region. ❑

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Bamboo: Rejuvenating Rural Economy

Suresh Prabhu

Bamboo is a natural indigenous raw material that can play a key role in the rejuvenation of the rural economy impacting, both, the agricultural sector and industrial sector. It is the most environment-friendly plant on this planet, being one of the highest carbon sequesters amongst all the floral species, which grows rapidly, matures within a few years and re-grows after harvesting without the need for replanting, making it a perennial 'renewable' resource.

The Coronavirus epidemic has wreaked havoc on the global economy, and the Indian economy has not come out unscathed. The lockdown dealt a double whammy to the economy, one due to the closing down of all economic activities and two, due to the flight of labour from cities back to rural areas. The losses accruing to the industrial, services and agricultural sector due to the lockdown are huge. Add to it, the time it will take for these industries to ramp-up production to their pre-Covid levels and the numbers are staggering.

The large-scale reverse migration of rural populations from cities and industrialised and agricultural & horticulture belts across the country has created immense pressure on the rural economy, that is already dealing with issues of unemployment and underemployment. The government has responded to the distress of the returning migrants by expanding MGNREGA works to ensure that they have some work on hand.

But a significant majority of these returning migrants are skilled and semi-skilled labour having worked in the industrial and construction industry and service industries like hospitality, logistics, retail as well commercial agriculture and horticulture. MGNREGA is unable to offer them opportunities that allow them to utilise their skills and earn livelihoods and can at best be an emergency provision. It was in fact the lack of adequate employment opportunities in their villages and towns that had led to the

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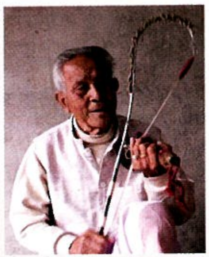
Bamboo: Cultural Linkage

Pena is a single stringed musical instrument. It consists of two parts, the penamasa or dhorr which is a bamboo pole attached to a coconut shell and pena cheijing or chorr, which is a bow used to produce friction on the string. The pena player, called Pena Asheiba/Pena Khongba, also sings along while playing. Pena is an indispensable part of **Meitei society in Manipur**, used in ritualistic functions like Lai Haraouba and Lai Ikouba.



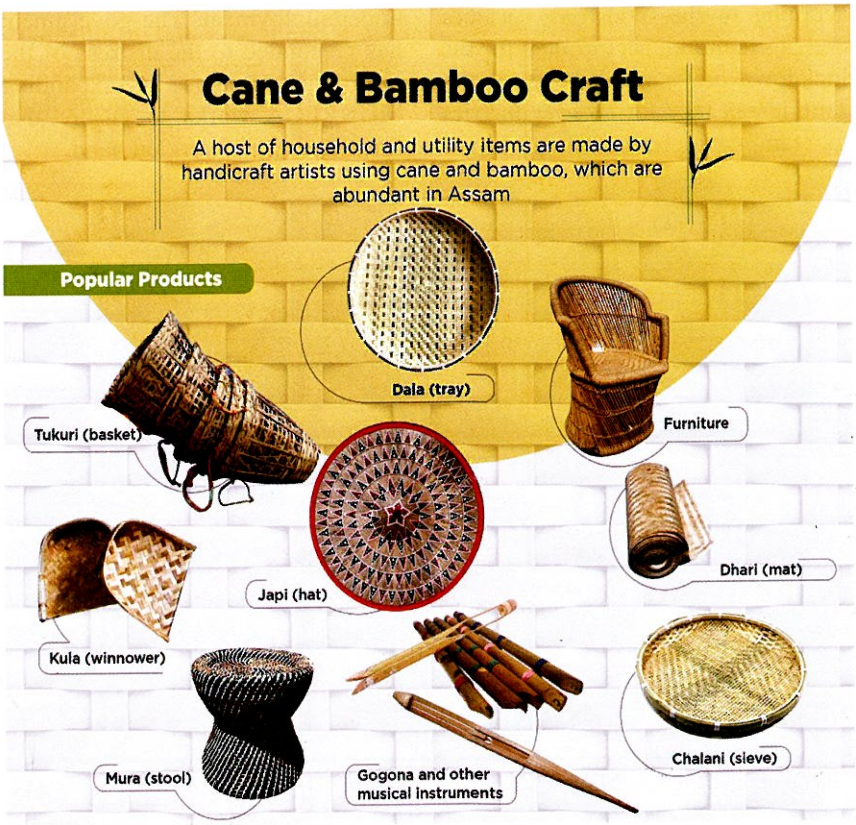
outmigration of these populations in the first place.

Scientific research has provided evidence that the Novel Coronavirus is here to stay. At the same time, our urban-centric growth model makes it imperative that we contain the pandemic in our cities as soon as possible so as to enable the opening of our economy. The urban-centric and concentrated nature of our development has led to the emergence of high-density economic clusters. The lack of affordable housing and planned urban growth has led migrants to live in congested unhygienic environments, often without regular access to water and hygienic sanitation facilities. The pandemic has also exposed the lack of readiness of public and private health-care infrastructure to take in rising numbers of COVID-19 patients.

But the industries, service and commercial agriculture in the growth clusters across the country have been badly hit due to the flight of migrants; and efforts are being made to bring back skilled migrants and restart the economy. It is also a reality that underemployment and unemployment existed in urban growth clusters due to the availability of surplus labour that had migrated from the rural areas in great numbers. It is therefore imperative that a significant portion of this semi-skilled and skilled labour that contributed to this surplus labour be retained in the villages. This will have a two-pronged impact; for one it will reduce the population pressure on our urban growth centers and two, it will make available semi-skilled and skilled labour in our villages to rejuvenate the rural economy across the country.

The contemporary 'coping with coronavirus' context offers us an excellent opportunity to think of out-of-the-box ideas and work towards building an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. We must remember that India was a strong and self-reliant economy in ancient times. The pre-industrialised Indian economy saw a vibrant global mercantile trade where products made by local artisans using natural raw materials had great demand. We must draw lessons from this great economic heritage to grow our footprint in the global market. As we march on this redesigned trajectory in economic growth, we must walk the path of sustainable development, building climate resilience through mitigation and adaptation processes.

Bamboo is one such natural indigenous raw material that can play a key role in the rejuvenation of the rural economy impacting, both, the agricultural sector and industrial sector. It is the most environment-friendly plant on this planet, being one of the highest carbon sequesters amongst all the floral species. It grows rapidly, matures within a few years and re-grows after harvesting without the need for replanting, making it a perennial 'renewable' resource. Bamboo is also a very effective natural resource to control soil erosion, raise the water table and improve fertility of even the most degraded soils. Bamboo can thus play a key role in combating desertification by restoring degraded lands and protecting forests.


Cane & Bamboo Craft
A host of household and utility items are made by handicraft artists using cane and bamboo, which are abundant in Assam
Popular Products
Dala (tray)
Furniture
Tukuri (basket)
Dhari (mat)
Japi (hat)
Kula (winnower)
Mura (stool)
Gogona and other musical instruments
Chalani (sieve)

Bamboo can add up to 6-8 inches of humus to the soil every year while a single Bamboo plant can bind up to 6 CUM of soil. Besides, most Bamboo species form an evergreen canopy, shedding leaves all year round and this too contributes to improving soil health. It can be easily integrated into agriculture by growing it on farm boundaries and farmland as well as non-agricultural land including wastelands and degraded lands, and in homesteads. Bamboo provides farmers a perennial income, allowing for annual harvests at any time of the year offering them a robust and dependable supplement to an otherwise relatively fickle agriculture.

Bamboo, a woody grass is a versatile material with an aesthetic appearance and lends itself to the manufacture of furniture, lifestyle and interiors products and is increasingly being used to replace timber. The tensile strength of bamboo is also being harnessed to reduce the use of steel, a high embodied energy resource, in industries like construction and has the potential to generate exponential employment, on-site and off-site, in the construction industry.

The International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation (INBAR) is a multilateral development organisation that promotes environmentally sustainable development using Bamboo and Rattan. It has 46 Member States. Its unique set-up makes INBAR an important representative for Member States. With over 40 of its Member States from the Global South, INBAR has played an especially strong role in promoting South-South cooperation for the last twenty years. Since its inception, it has been making a real difference to the lives of millions of people and environments around the world, with achievements in areas such as: raising standards; promoting safe, resilient Bamboo construction; restoring degraded land; capacity-building; and informing green policy and Sustainable Development Goal objectives. In 1998, when I was the Union Minister for Environment and Forests, India became a signatory to the INBAR treaty.

My Ministry took the initiative to start Bamboo promotion in our country. I also facilitated to establish a not-for-profit organisation, Konkan Bamboo and Cane Development Centre (KONBAC), in my constituency, Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra in 2004. KONBAC in partnership with INBAR focused on the development of Bamboo as a key resource for catalysing an inclusive green economy. One of the key strategies pursued by KONBAC was to work towards positioning bamboo as a pro-poor credible alternative to timber providing the rural poor and small land holders an opportunity to participate in and benefit from the US$100+ billion wood products market. The second important strategy was to leverage Bamboo's off-farm economic value and opportunity to realise the considerable environmental benefits that its growing offers.

> **The contemporary 'coping with coronavirus' context offers us an excellent opportunity to think of out-of-the-box ideas and work towards building an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. We must remember that India was a strong and self-reliant economy in ancient times. The pre-industrialised Indian economy saw a vibrant global mercantile trade where products made by local artisans using natural raw materials had great demand. We must draw lessons from this great economic heritage to grow our footprint in the global market.**

KONBAC manufactures not only furniture and interior accessories, but also constructs entire building structures made entirely from Bamboo, both in India and abroad. Over the last sixteen years, it has succeeded in changing the perception of Bamboo from being a 'poor man's timber' to a 'rich man's choice' as a credible alternative material of high-quality wood that is currently being used for furniture and construction. This has helped move bamboo up the value ladder as a material of choice for the environmentally conscious community and for those consumers who seek novelty.

Today, KONBAC has developed a self-sustaining institutional ecosystem and has a fully developed facility for designing, prototyping

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Nazhu Festival - Nagaland

The Nazhu Festival of the Pochury-Naga from Müluori merits attention as it continues to be observed by a small group of people who barely keep alive the ritualistic practices associated with the ancestral religion. The most symbolic and unique element common to all is heralding of Nazhu, with the erection of a bamboo totem Awuthrüu, that resembles a giant wind chime hung from a tall bamboo. The totem is erected any day from the 20th to 24th February. For the Laniri Nale, the totem goes up on the 24th February with all the formalities completed on this day.

and producing marketable Bamboo products for domestic and international markets. It has also put in place mechanisms to link poor Bamboo producers to larger lucrative markets and has emerged as a model that is being emulated elsewhere in India and abroad. These interventions have provided an income to thousands of people over the last sixteen years. It has also led to the greening of the environment through the plantation of Bamboo. The KONBAC experience demonstrates that the Bamboo sector has the potential to offer exponential entrepreneurship and employment opportunities to rural populations like farmers, youth and women in farm-based and non-farm enterprises.

Another dimension of promoting Bamboo key driver for agro-industrialisation is its low dependence on high-technology or infrastructure, its easy availability in the rural areas and availability of local labour. Further, Bamboo clusters can be developed as hub-and-spoke models with technology enabled and high-skill processes being undertaken at the hub and primary processing undertaken at the village level. This dispersed model of production can lead to exponential employment opportunities to rural communities across the country.

This humble grass, also known as green gold, not only has the potential of rejuvenating the rural economy but is also a key resource for building climate resilience and catalysing an inclusive green economy. The sustainable qualities of bamboo are critical to the contemporary policy discourse on 'circular economy' that involves designing products, services and supply chains which are regenerative: that is, which are based on renewable energy and resources, do not generate waste and keep products and materials in use for the longest time possible. Bamboo can become the cornerstone of the circular economy and offers India the opportunity to leapfrog to an inclusive green economy. ❑

Maharashtra: Richly Diverse and Vibrant

Meenal Joglekar

The culture of Maharashtra culture is a perfect blend of fascinating folk, traditional, classical and contemporary art forms, rich literature, robust festivals, delicious food, colourful clothing, varied artefacts, and innovative modern entertainment. Whatever the era, it has always inspired the artists from all over the globe and will continue inspiring future generations.

Maharashtra, as the name suggests, is truly a magnificent land, having a unique and glorious heritage of art, culture, tradition, architecture and literature. The picturesque sea coast, the Sahyadri Mountain Ranges, the bountiful rivers etc. contribute to geographical as well as rich cultural diversity of the State. Here, we take a brief tour of some of the traditional visual arts and performing folk art forms of Maharashtra.

VISUAL ARTS

The rich visual art forms of Maharashtra range from the enthralling rock sculptures found in the caves and grottos, to the astounding wall paintings, to the distinct temple architecture, to the very unique Chitrakathi and Ganjifa paintings to the appealing Warli paintings to the attractive Rangoli to recently discovered Petroglyphs (rock carvings).

Cave Art

Maharashtra is home to the largest number of caves in India, of all sizes, shapes and hues, from ancient rock-cut ones to ones with intricate sculptures. These caves are fascinating archeological legacies. Caves lead to an understanding of the world–as it existed during those times–and the cultural, social and religious practices. The Elephanta caves, the Ajanta and the Ellora caves are enlisted in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list.

The caves at Ajanta and Ellora near Aurangabad are a striking reminder of an age of Buddhism at its peak. There are about 800 caves spread across various districts but of these the 32 caves at Ajanta stand out distinctively because of their architectural splendour, legacy, and artistic masterpieces. The caves include paintings and rock-cut sculptures described as among the

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finest surviving examples of ancient Indian art, particularly expressive paintings that present emotions through gesture, pose and form. Caves 16, 17, 1 and 2 of Ajanta form the largest corpus of surviving ancient Indian wall-paintings. Ellora also called Verul, dates back to the Rashtrakuta dynasty, about 1,500 years ago. There are over 100 caves at the site, all excavated from the basalt cliffs in the Charanandri Hills, 34 of which are open to public, that have evidence of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain 'viharas' and 'mathas'. Cave 16 features the largest single monolithic rock excavation in the world, the Kailasha temple, a chariot shaped monument dedicated to Lord Shiva. The Pitalkhora caves located in the Satamala Hill Ranges of Maharashtra, about 40 kilometers from Ellora, consist of 14 rock-cut cave monuments which date back to the third century BCE.

The Elephanta caves are located on a small island in the sea near Mumbai. The caves are hewn from solid basalt rock. The carvings narrate Hindu mythologies, with the large monolithic 20 feet Trimurti Sadashiva (three-faced Shiva), Nataraja (Lord of dance) and Yogishvara (Lord of Yoga) being the most celebrated. The Kanheri caves, around the outskirts of Mumbai are considered to be very important to understand the development of Buddhism in Western India. They contain Buddhist sculptures and relief carvings, paintings and inscriptions, dating from the 1st century CE to the 10th century CE. The Bhaja, Karla, Bedse, Pandavleni, Lenyadri, Manmodi and Shivneri caves are well-known for their architecture, sculpture and paintings.

Petroglyphs (Rock Carvings)

The recently discovered 1,000 rock carvings in Ratnagiri district, which are estimated to be 1200 years old, have immense archeological significance. The carvings cover over 52 sites, which have a huge range of images from human and animal forms to abstract pattern and fertility symbols. They are carved into the flat open surface of the laterite stone, cutting deep inside, which gives a scale and unique look to the images.

Warli Paintings

The Warli art is a painting style of the tribals who predominantly inhabit Dahanu, Talaseri, Jawhar, Palghar, Mokhada and Vikhramgad, all in

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Zadipatti & Dashavatar – Maharashtra

Zadipatti

Zadipatti is practised in the rice cultivating region/Eastern region of Maharashtra, which includes Chandrapur Bhandar and Gadchiroli district of Vidarbha, during the harvest season and derives its name from the local name zadi for rice. The theatre art of this region is known as Zadipatti Rangbhumi. It is a blend of commercial and folk theatre form. Live music is a vital part of the form and the actors are singers as well. Although practised by various theatre groups these days, the region is inhabited by tribes like Gond, Korfu and Pardhi; and Zadipatti was born out of the tribal performing art called Dandar, which was a theatrical performance combining music and dance.

Dashavatar: Traditional Folk Theatre Form

Dashavatar is a folk theatre form practised by farmers in the Sindhudurg district of the South Konkan region of Maharashtra and the North Goa district of Goa. Dashavatar is popular form of drama in the rural areas. Initially popularised in the Konkan area, today it come to be looked upon as art of the classes. The performance uses bright make-up and costumes. It is accompanied by three musical instruments: a paddle harmonium, tabla and zanj (cymbals).

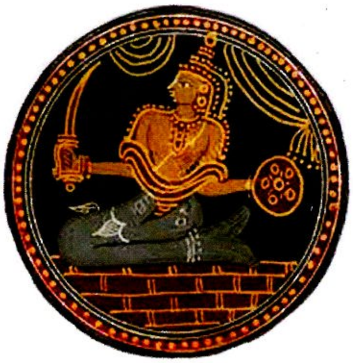
Thane district. The art uses very basic representation-a circle, a triangle and a square-to depict nature and daily activities of the tribals. The circle represents the sun and the moon, the triangle is derived from mountains and pointed trees, and the square indicates a sacred space or a piece of land. The central motif in these ritual paintings is surrounded by scenes portraying hunting, fishing and farming, festivals and dances, trees and animals. Two triangles joined at the tips represent humans and animals. Apart from ritualistic paintings, the other Warli paintings portray the daily activities of the people. Only white colour is used in Warli paintings. The white pigment is a mixture of rice paste and water with gum as a binder. A bamboo stick crushed at one end is used as a paint brush.

The Pinguli Chitrakathi

The Thakkar tribe of Pinguli village near Kudal in Sindhudurg has been practicing Pinguli Chitrakathi since the 17th century. Their unique style of painting is done using a paper, brush and handmade colours. It follows a sequence and is based on the stories of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. A collection of pictures is used to tell the story, which unfolds in the form of songs supported by the music of traditional instruments such as *veena, taal* and *huduk*.

The Ganjifa

Ganjifa are handmade playing cards which were earlier used by the Royal family of Sawantwadi and have reached several museums all over the world now. These cards are made from circular pieces of paper on which intricate designs of Dashavatara (Ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu) are hand-painted. A set of Dashavatara Ganjifa consists of 120 cards. There are ten suits, each having 12 cards. The cards are made from paper that is covered with a mixture of tamarind seed powder and oil, painted and coated with lac. The Royal cards used to have decorative borders. The box made for keeping the set of cards is also specially designed with pictures and decorative motifs all round. Under the patronage of the Royal family of Sawantwadi, the Chitari community has preserved this dying art.



The ektari (one-string drone) provides melodic support, while the mridang (double-sided horizontal drum), taal (cymbals), chiplya (clappers) take care of the rhythm aspect. Formats such as bhajan, kirtan, sankirtan, or gayan have evolved in varied combinations. In addition, a whole array of forms, including dhavale, abhang, gaulan, bharud, stotra, arati, shloka, ovi, karunashatak, phatka, katav and virani have been developed.

Bhitti Chitra

Bhitti Chitra is an art style that depicts religious themes on the walls of houses or temples. The Matheran or Mahatma communities, who are well-known for their mineral-painted depictions are traditional Bhitti Chitra artistes. The paintings are embossed with gold and silver to enhance the depictions. This is commonly created on temple walls and is often intricate. Frescoed walls and intricately painted ceilings reveal the religious context of the work of this community. The Matherans live in Godvard near Pali and are known for their paintings of the Gangaur idols.

Rangoli

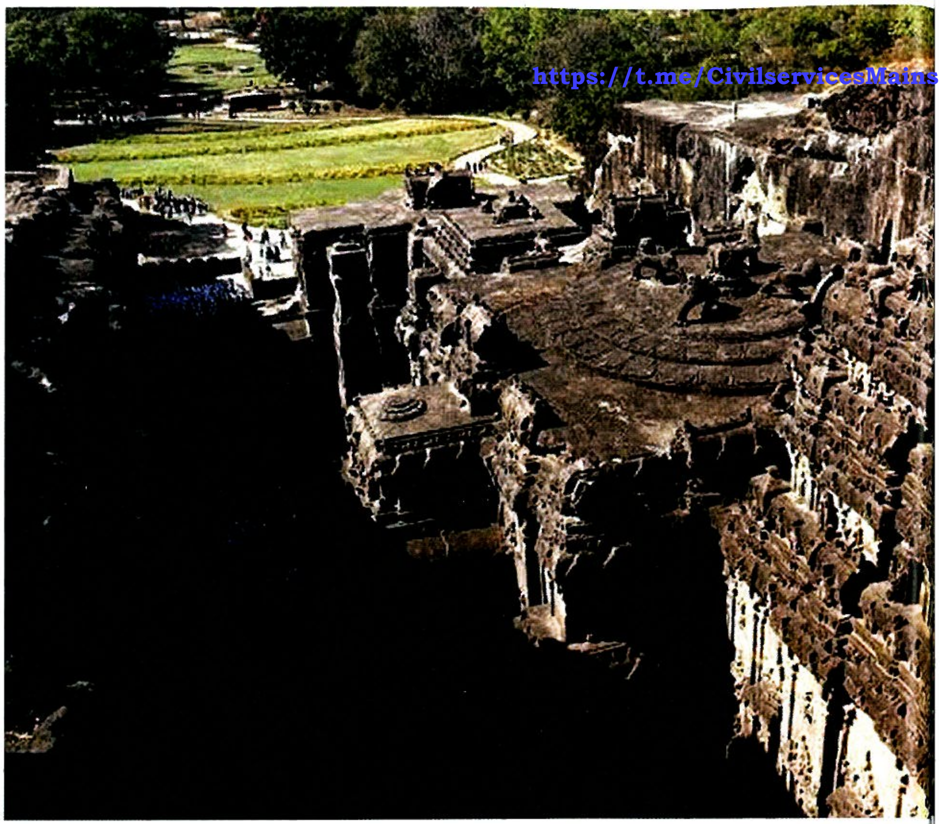
Rangoli is a traditional floor art which is practiced in almost every household. Mesmerising patterns are created on the floor or the ground using materials such as coloured rice, dry flour, coloured sand or flower petals. The beautiful colour schemes, patterns, things and people drawn in Rangoli look so real that it takes a while to be convinced that these are not photographs, but illustrations created with swirls, shades and splashes of powdered colours. In recent times, the Rangoli artists from Juchandra, a hamlet in Vasai district have popularised new rangoli forms-food pictorials, nature and landscapes, underwater and on water, geometrical, three dimensional, portraits and *Sanskar Bharti*. The themes for rangoli are varied: celebrating religious, historical or topical personalities and events, and highlighting current social issues such as female foeticide, national integrity. Glitters, paints and stickers make the art form even more beautiful.

PERFORMING ARTS

Maharashtra has a rich heritage of performing art forms like singing, dance, puppetry, theatre, which are stunning and vibrant.

Tribal Music

The tribes of Bhil, Mahadev Koli, Gond, Warli, Kokna, Katkari, Thakur, Gavit, Kolam, Korku, Andh, Malhar and Pardhi, are concentrated mostly in the districts of Khandesh, Kolaba, Nashik, and parts of Pune and Ahmednagar. An important feature of their music is a close blend of movements and vocals. Instruments are made out of easily available materials such as bamboo, hide, gourd, clay and leaves which are played with great dexterity. All important events, such as childbirth, initiation, marriage or death, as also change of seasons and harvesting, have specific music associated with them. Maharashtra has a rich tradition of folk music.



Nandiwala

The *nandiwala* is a specialist performer who presents animal shows. Combining tricks with some soothsaying he employs *gubgubee* (a double-sided membranophone), *ghadyal-tipru* (a mallet used to strike a metal disc) and tiny bells as instruments. Rhythmic playing, controlled verbalisation, loud thumping and scraping constitute the musical input. After the show, the performer asks for alms.

> **Instruments are made out of easily available materials such as bamboo, hide, gourd, clay and leaves which are played with great dexterity. All important events, such as childbirth, initiation, marriage or death, as also change of seasons and harvesting, have specific music associated with them.**

Bahuroopi

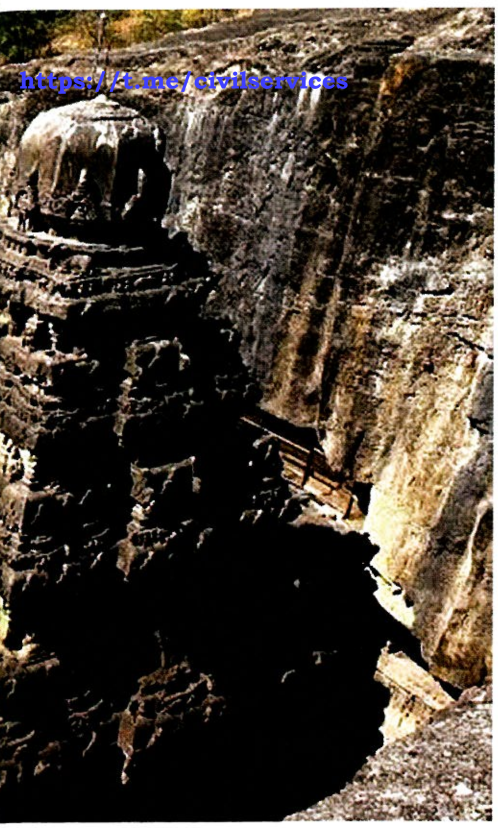
The term literally means one with many disguises as the performer parades in different disguises impersonating pregnant women, young mothers, etc. He is a devotee of cult deities like Bahiroba, Khandoba, Jakhai and Janai, and his songs, full of verse and rhymes, are a humorous invitation to marriage. As this form is drama-oriented, the recitation has a quick, delightful tempo. No musical instruments are employed.

Dhangari Ovya

This movement-oriented song is associated with goatherds (*dhangars*) and centred on Biruba, an incarnation of Lord Shiva. The *dhangars*, colourfully clad, dance around players of a huge *dhol* executing vigorous movements. Broad forceful rhythms, emphatic stanza endings and powerful voice projections are a part of this performance, which is usually held outdoors.

Vasudev Geet

Vasudev, the performer, is an incarnation of Lord Krishna, as



is apparent from the distinctive headgear of peacock feathers and flute. *Ghungaroo* (ankle bells) and a hand-held pair of *manjiri* (cymbals) accompany the flute or the singing. Vasudev sings himself and executes nimble, delicate dance steps and whirling body movements.

Waghya-Murali Geet

The songs form a sub-variety of *gondhal*, a known form of ritual theatre. However, the feminine element qualitatively differs from the parent genre in its aesthetic orientation. *Waghya* and *murali* are respectively the male and female devotees of Khandoba. The *murali* is the chief dancer and the *waghya* is the accompanist, participating in the performance known as *jagran* (keeping awake). The performance is distinguished by the *murali*'s attractive costume and the sensuous grace of her movements. *Tuntune* (one string rhythm-cum-drone chordophone), *ghungaroos* and *ghol* (a small bell) are the only instruments used.

Devotional Music

Devotional music has contributed immensely to music in all regions through its quality and accessibility. Firstly, it explores varied vocalising modes such as chanting, recitation and singing, as also the solo and choral format, and secondly it employs instrumental resources judiciously. The *ektari* (one-string drone) provides melodic support, while the *mridang* (double-sided horizontal drum), *taal* (cymbals), *chipiya* (clappers) take care of the rhythm aspect. Cycles of four and eight are commonly used for rhythm. Formats such as *bhajan*, *kirtan*, *sankirtan*, or *gayan* have evolved in varied combinations. In addition, a whole array of forms, including *dhavale*, *abhang*, *gaulan*, *bharud*, *stotra*, *arati*, *shloka*, *ovi*, *karunashatak*, *phatka*, *katav* and *virani* have been developed. Various religious movements (*Sampradaya*), such as the *Samartha*, *Datta*, *Warkari*, and others have further added to the spectrum of the category. *Kirtan* has about eight varieties in Maharashtra alone.

Folk Dance

Dancing is a vital part of any ritual, with the only variation that the method is seldom fixed or defined but is rather a fluid discipline.

Ritualistic Dance Forms

Ritualistic dance forms can be seen in the Khandoba Jagran of the *waghya-murali*, together with Amba, Bhavani, Renuka, Gondhal of the Gondhalis. Waghya-Murali perform the ritualistic folk play with

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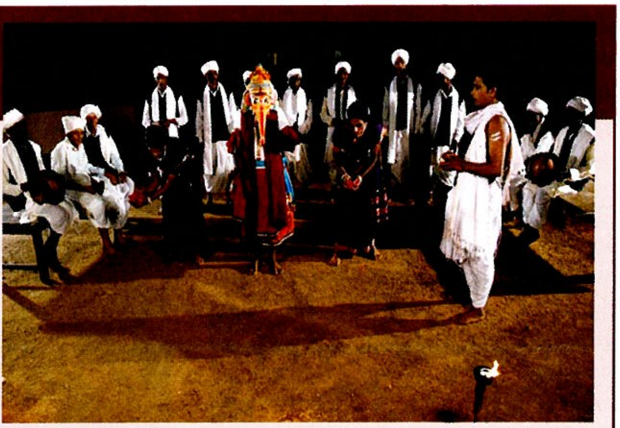
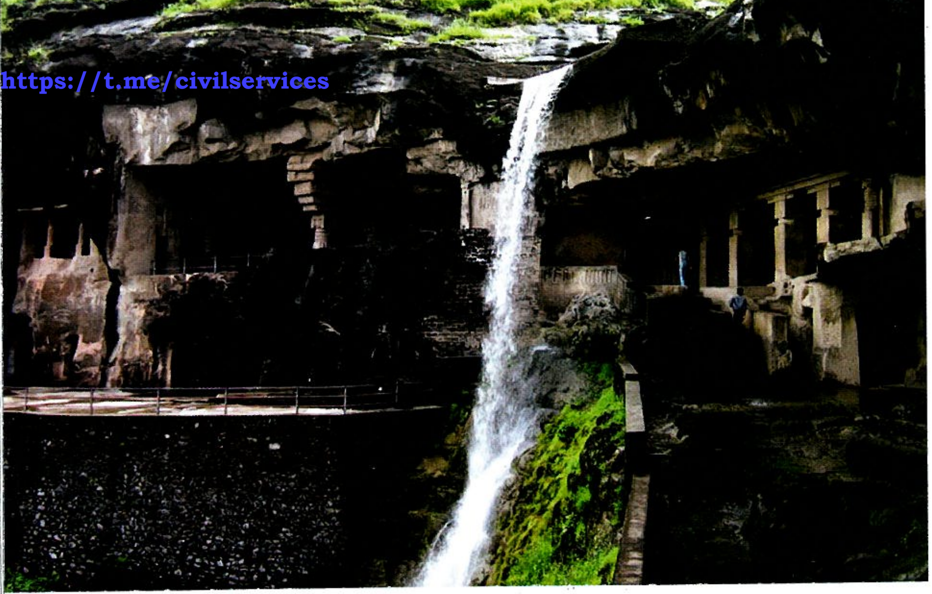
Ranmāle- Goa



Ranmale is a ritualistic and folk theatre form based on mythological stories from the popular Indian epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. It is presented during the Holi festival which is celebrated as Shigmo (spring festival) in Goa and Konkan areas. The word 'Ranmale' has evolved from two words, 'Ran' which means battle and 'Male' representing the traditional torch used as a source of light during the performance. Ranmale is performed in Western India in the Sattari Taluka of North Goa District and Sanguem Taluka of South Goa District. It is also performed in the border villages of Maharashtra like Mangeli, Patye and is also practised in Karnataka in the villages of Chikhale, Kankumbi, Parwad, Gawali, Degao. This form comprises of dance, drama and folk songs called Jats. Each participant of the drama makes his entry to the tune of folk songs. The traditional instrument, Ghumat is an earthenware drum with one of its ends covered with the skin of the monitor lizard and the other mouth kept open. The accompanying instruments Kansale, cymbals of brass, are used for the base rhythm. Jats are sung by the initiator of the folk drama called Sutradhar, while the folk artists stand in a row on the stage acting like a backdrop. In the village of Zarme, the presentation of Ranmale is a must after the annual festival of Chorotsav, while in Caranzole it precedes the festivities. It is a popular belief that non-performance of the element may invite the wrath of the village deity.



jagran. The participants through the dance express their devotion to God Khandoba and Goddess Renukadevi. There are specific steps along with body movements. Since they hold the *ghati* (a cymbal like instrument) in one hand, their hand movements are rather restricted.

Similarly in Gondhal, the *gondhali* (male performer) dances uninhibitedly to the beats of the sambal and at the same time sings *gondhal* songs which are devotional in nature. In this performance, the little jumps and circular movements that the *gondhali* performs are spontaneous and not pre-planned.

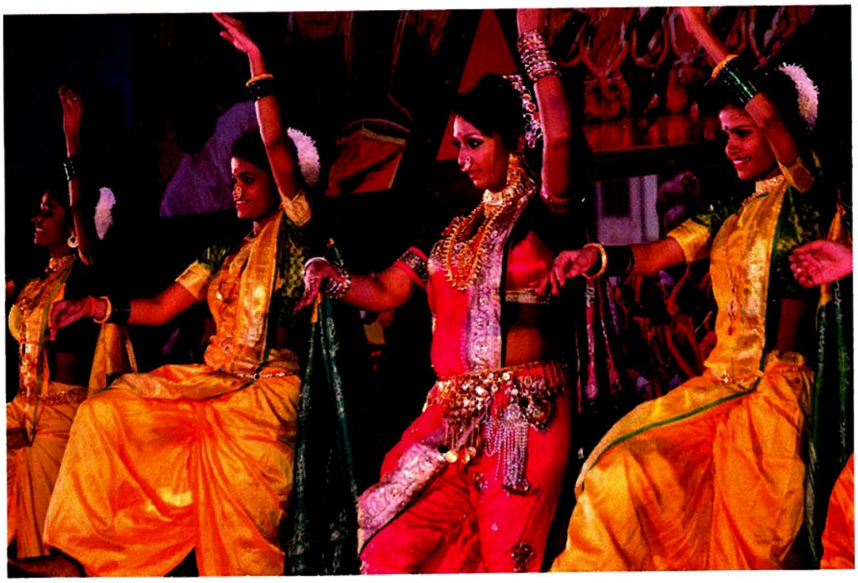
Devotional Dance Forms

The *bharud* and the *kirtan* are spontaneous devotional dance forms. In *bharud,* the *bharudkar* (performer) sings the opening line, then preaches delivering a spiritual message, and between and after indulges in dancing. The dance movements are natural, encompassing swaying hand movements and spontaneous little jumps on the beat, all to the rhythm of the *pakhawaj* (a kind of drum) and the cymbal. The *warkari kirtan* or *dindi* dance is performed during the Pandharpur pilgrimage. The dance is not choreographed but is extempore with an overflow of devotional expressions of the *warkari* (pilgrims), ardent devotees of Lord Vitthal. The participants generally fall into two rows facing one another. The *mridanga* and *veena* players who lead the dance walk between the rows. Other devotional folk dance forms are *fugdi, zimma, pinga, atyapatya, lagori* and *chendufali*.

Bohada which is also known as *Panchami, Akhadi, Chaitee* constitutes a dance drama associated with mythological stories. It is popular in the tribal belt of Thane, Palghar, Nashik and Nagar districts. The stories of *Ramayana, Mahabharata, Lalit and Dashawatara* all form part of the repertoire. These are executed during the annual village festival colloquially known as *gramotsava*. Masked dancers representing divine characters such as Ganapati, Riddhi, Siddhi, Saraswati enter first at the holy place of *bohada* and these are followed by characters such as Ram, Laxman, Ravan, Hanuman, Tratika, Bhasmasur, Bhairavnath and Khandoba. The characters perform the elite warrior dance. The performance reaches a crescendo with the musical instruments like *dhol, sanai, manjiri, sambal* being played simultaneously.

Social Awareness Dance Forms

There are various dance forms which do the noble job of conveying social messages. Amongst them, *powadas* (ballads) have been popular ever since the time of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. *Powada* has an in-built v*eer ras* (valiant spirit) in it and successfully narrates the tales of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and other brave warriors. It is well-known for the propagation of social doctrines and pronouncing social messages at various levels. A *powada* essentially consists of the *shahir* (bard) who enacts the stories entwined with dance forms. Though it may not be a complete form of dance, the performance uses drama expressions wherein the artist enacts different characters through facial expressions and body language. Ballad singers often use the *daf* (tambourine) and



assume the characteristic posture wherein the person places the right leg in front of the left, and they keep jumping on their feet while they vividly narrate the victorious moments of the hero.

Entertaining Dance Forms

Lavani is an aesthetical combination of singing, enactment and dance, and is one of the most popular folk dance forms of Maharashtra. Clad in beautiful nine-yard sarees, the main dancer, along with her troupe of women, executes sensuous and stylish moves. With *ghungroos* (anklet bells) chiming around their feet, they dance gracefully with beautiful facial expressions. Tamasha is rich in *sringar ras* (romanticism). There are two types of *tamasha, dholki fadacha tamasha* and *sangeet baricha tamahsa*. *Lavani* is performed in both these forms.

There are other forms of *Lavani* which are characteristically devotional and ballad type. In these, social conventions and beliefs are depicted together with sex-education and marriage-related customs. In this process of imparting an educational touch, various shades of feminine beauty, dresses, ornaments together with the different hues of emotions of women and men are also depicted in *Lavani*. The excellence of the *Lavani* singers and dancers has taken this folk art not only to the national stage but internationally too.

Assorted Folk Dance Forms

In the Raigad and Ratnagiri districts of Maharashtra *Naman, Khele and Balya dance (Jakhadi*) are prominent folk forms. *Naman and Khele* are purely dramatic forms which are performed during the Holi season whereas *Jakhadi* (also known as *Balya* dance) is performed during Ganesh Festival. The artists are amateurs and wear *ghungroos* on their left leg. *Dholaki, tal* and *ghungroos* tied to a stick are the instruments used in *Jakhadi*. The dance is performed in a circular formation. The instrument players are at the center of the circle and other participants dance outside the circle. Some mythological riddle-songs are presented in *jakhadi* along with the same pattern of dance throughout. In *Naman-Khele* too, divine persons and other mythological characters are introduced. Other dance forms that are popular in the districts of Thane and Palghar are *kalyachi fugdi, tichki, chapai, radha* and *gauri*.

In Sindhudurg district, Sawantwadi Tehsil; the *chapai* dance of the shepherd community is popularly known. It resembles the *gaja* dance of western Maharashtra. Musical instruments like *dhol, kaithal* and *sanai* are used in *chapai* and *gaja* dances respectively. These dances are performed to honour the home-deities of the shepherds *Biroba* and *Jotiba*. Participants form different dance patterns, executing high jumps in circular movements holding aloft a handkerchief in one hand. Also popular are *lezim* and *gof.* The latter is the favourite of the Thakkar tribals of Junnar tehsil in Pune.

Koli dance is the dance of the fishing community (Kolis). It is performed on festive days and at marriages. Men and women dance together invoking the gods. They dance to the music of the *dhol, pipani, sanai* and *ghumat*. In Vidarbha, the *khadi-gammat* folk dance is performed only by men. Popular with the tribal communities are the dances of *Ghusadi, Tipri, Ghorpad, Holi* and *Banjara*. Women perform the *Mangalagaur* and folk plays during *Nagpanchami* in their community accompanied by relatives and friends.

Maharashtra's art and culture is diverse in nature, homogenous in soul, and strengthens community bonds bringing people closer to each other. Whatever the era, it has always inspired the artists from all over the globe and will continue inspiring future generations. ❑

Culture: A Unifying Force

Ashok Kalariya

A melange of traditions, customs, arts, beliefs and values that date back to the times even before the state borders were marked, embraced in their authentic avatar as well as modified in the spirit of modernisation, is what makes the diverse culture of Gujarat popular the world over; with communities, ethnic groups, religiously diverse populace coming together with one unifying force: their love for Gujarat.

What can be said about the culture of Gujarat without insisting that you experience it with your own eyes, ears and all your senses. What can be told, without hearing the enticing tunes of folk *garba* and the captivating sounds of *dhols*? What picture can be painted without traditional handicrafts like the Kutchhi embroidery and Patola sarees? What flavours can we introduce without giving one a taste of the hot and spicy *wagharel amarcha* (fried green chillies) or *Keri nu athanu* (raw mango pickle) alongside all other meals? What can be celebrated about the culture of Gujarat without rejoicing the numerous unique fairs and festivals across all the regions of the state. One thing that we can say with utmost joy and pride is that this culture is rich, diverse and yet has a beautifully unifying spirit that runs all along Gujarat.

The essence of this culture lies in the people who reside in the state, making it as colourful as it is today. You may think of people residing in Gujarat as one collective population: Gujaratis. However, when you delve deeper into the culture, you will see how rich and diverse this populace is. People of various ethnic groups that include Hindus, Jains, Parsi, Muslims and many others; have called Gujarat their home and not just enjoyed participating in the beautiful culture but also contributed to its rich heritage, giving it a unique identity of their own.

A language that is more than 700 years old, Gujarati is spoken by more than 60 million people in the cities, towns, villages and every bylane of Gujarat. However, as one travels across the state from Surat to Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar to Bhuj; vocabulary, intonations, pronunciations and enunciations change, reflecting diverse dialects and the unique culture of each of these regions. Among the various dialects of the language spoken throughout the state, standard Gujarati, Saurashtra Gujarati, Gamadia Gujarati, Kathiawari, Parsi, Bohri and Kutchhi

are some which will strike you distinctly, but they all mean the same when they say, "Maru Gujarat"(My Gujarat); love for their motherland that is their biggest unifying force.

Along with language, flourishes Gujarati literature with well-known laureates like Narsinh Mehta, Akho, Premanand, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram, Dalpatram, Narmad, Govardhanram Tripathi, K. M. Munshi, Umashankar Joshi and Pannalal Patel. With their contribution to a literary tradition that dates back to 1000 AD, one can experience a glimpse of religious beliefs, philosophical discourses and spiritual enlightenment that has built the essence of the state's culture. Notable poets Kavi Kant and Kalapi too are names that have left their mark on the state's history and culture. Modern day writers like Suresh Dalal, Vinod Joshi, Gunavant Shah, Joravarsinh Jadav too have kept alive the pride in Gujarati literature and have made notable contributions in celebrating the glory of Gujarati language, reflecting their love for their culture.

A language as expressive as the words is music. A universal language that knows no boundaries but reflects the culture of the region in all its glory, is the popular music of Gujarat that has contributed to the global fanfare of not just the state but India's culture. Right from the very base of music—a number of ragas like Khambavati, Gujari Todi Bilaval, Sorathi, Lati and Ahiri have emerged from various regions of Gujarat, making for several majestic creations since generations. Gujarat has the pride of being the motherland of legendary musicians like Baiju Bawra and Tana Riri, who belong to this state and contributed to its glorious heritage. Apart from the classical forms, even folk music of the state has won global popularity. Garba, while most popular across the world, isn't the only form of folk music in the state. The melody of Charans and Gadhavis in their pure forms is as richly celebrated in the state even today, showing that it is an art form, a culture well-preserved, a universal language of pride, passion and pure love that speaks to all.

Along with language, flourishes Gujarati literature with well-known laureates like Narsinh Mehta, Akho, Premanand, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram, Dalpatram, Narmad, Govardhanram Tripathi, K. M. Munshi, Umashankar Joshi and Pannalal Patel. With their contribution to a literary tradition that dates back to 1000 AD, one can experience a glimpse of religious beliefs, philosophical discourses and spiritual enlightenment that has built the essence of the state's culture.

Where music is enchanting, dance forms too are mesmerising. And what do we say about the popular folk dance of Gujarat that isn't already known. It is an awe-inspiring wonder that an entire population comes out as a community to dance the revered *garba* and *ras* across the state. Navratri is one of the most popular festivals of Gujarat. This dance festival that goes on for nine consecutive nights has the record of being the longest dance festival of the world.

Such culturally unique are the people of Gujarat, with their unique arts, crafts, music and joie de vivre, that there is always a celebration round the corner. Not just the dance festivals, but more than 100 celebrations take place every year across the state, owing to which Gujarat is known as the land of fairs and festivals. A festival that spreads the colours of Gujarati culture in the skies, is Uttarayan, also known as Makar Sankranti, and popularly called the kite festival. With

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KALEIDOSCOPE

Rathwa ni Gher: Tribal Dance of Rathwas

The Rathwas, who dwell in Rath-Vistar, the hilly area of the southeastern part of Gujarat state, perform the Rathwa ni Gher dance on the occasion of Holi (festival of colours) also known as Kavant festival, named after the place where the Holi carnival takes place. The Gher (dance with music) performances begin on Dhulendi, which is, literally, 'the day of flying coloured dust'. This is the day when people smear each other with colour powder. The festivities last for five days during which the Rathwas observe fast and abstain from sleeping on cots, washing clothes and bathing. Both men and women perform the Gher together, in groups of 20 to 25. Of all Rathwa dances performed on various occasions linked with the cycle of seasons, Rathwa ni Gher stands out as exquisite, colourful and spectacular. The intricate make-up, the synchronised footsteps, vigorous whirling of the dancers and the mesmerising symphony created through indigenous musical instruments show how antique and refined the dance form is it constitutes the Rathwas' creative expression of their religiosity, cultural identity and understanding of nature.

kites of all colours, designs, shapes and sizes soaring in the sky, one can see a reflection of the diverse population of the state intermingling in a spiritual sense, uniting in their culture and celebrations. In the past decade, Rannotsav has become the most sought-after fair of Gujarat with global fame, a time when the locals celebrate the most colourful and vibrant aspects of their culture; for tourists all over the world to come and experience.

Living in the tent city built at the white sand desert, enjoying the local cuisine, entertaining with folk dance and music are all part of the fair that the Rann of Kutch offers every winter. Tarnetar fair is one of the biggest fairs in the state. It is most popular for rural sports and exhibits of the most spectacular human pyramid formations for which participating contingents prepare all year round. While this trade fair celebrates the rural culture of the state, Gujarat also plays host to other states every year by organising the Sanskruti Kunj fair where crafts and art forms from across the country come and showcase their unique traditions, making Gujarat truly a culture that embraces diversity as a unifying force of culture.

When it is time for celebrations, it is also time to don the most vibrant and colourful outfits. Gujarat is popularly known for the hand-crafted Patola silk, with a few weaver families in Patan engaged in the craft. Its exclusivity is well-known, making it a much coveted silk which was adorned even by the Gaekwad queen, as seen in popular paintings and pictures of the time. Today, while still very exclusive in availability, the Patola has grown in popularity all over the world. It has come to become one of the threads woven together to form the rich cultural heritage of India.

Chaniya cholis and Kediyas, heavily embroidered and embellished with mirrors and trinkets are other festive wear that can be seen adorned by Gujaratis, not just during celebrations. In most parts of the state, you can notice people embrace these traditional outfits even as part of their daily routine.

Celebrations and fairs are not complete without some delicious, mouth-watering food and anyone who

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has visited a Gujarati home will tell you about the warm hospitality that is centered around food. Such is the culture of hospitality in Gujarat that even a simple home-cooked meal will be served like a royal feast with the guest being treated to local delicacies to no end. A popular jibe on Gujarati hospitality is that one must leave ample appetite before declaring that they are full, because that is when the real 'agrah' starts. But when it comes to cuisine that consists of such a wonderful variety of unique dishes, who can say no to few more servings. The cuisine too, is indicative of the diverse culture of the state and its history.

Sharing borders and traditions with Maharashtra and Mewar in the olden times, there is a similarity in the palate in regions around the southern and northern borders even in the modern day. Agriculturally rich, various regions of the state grow their unique grains which form the basis of the integral cuisine that the locals consume. The northern part of the state is known for the cultivation of maize; Saurashtra has abundance of *bajra*; South Gujarat is rich in its cultivation of *jowar*. The staple diet in each of these regions has been influenced by these locally cultivated crops. With growing advancement in storage and transport, the entire state now enjoys an amalgamation of a variety of grains, seasonal produce and fruits which come together to make a wholesome Gujarati thali.

It is in Gujarat that you can experience this diverse culture, with its ancient roots preserved and its modern avatar celebrated; with communities, ethnic groups, religiously diverse populace coming together with one unifying force: their love for Gujarat, their motherland. ❑

KALEIDOSCOPE

Sankheda Nu Lakh Kam: Lacquered turned wood furniture of Sankheda

Sankheda, a small town in the eastern region of Gujarat derives its name from 'sangheda', the word for a lathe in the Gujarati language. The town has about 80-100 families belonging to the 'Kharadi-Suthar' community identified with the occupation of wood turning. Lacquered, turned wood furniture with hand-painted motifs and traditional method of ornamentation, popularly known as Sankheda furniture, is thought to have been produced in the town from about 1855. The traditional craft process of making Sankheda furniture involves shaping and painting the members while the craftsman is turning the lathe. He wields the brush with great mastery to map the patterns freehand, achieving symmetric and even contours without using any measuring device or markings. As most of the craftsmen in Sankheda town are involved in this craft it gives them a strong sense of community identity and continuity. The ornate nature of the product lends itself to becoming a visible symbol of expression that has been identified as Gujarati within its local precinct and elsewhere. There is a wide range of furniture items produced including child's cradles, child's walkers to chairs, tables, and large swings.

Diverse Millet Culture

Pallavi Upadhyaya

India has had a rich diversity in its food and eating habits. The diversity of seasons, soils & culture also reflects in the diversity of grains and cereals that were grown across the length and breadth of the country. Millets are a group of small seeded grasses used as cereals. The Indian sub-continent has had a rich heritage of growing them and until very recently millets formed a very large part of our food basket.

Millets & the Indian Sub-Continent

Millets or 'Mota Anaaj' as they were referred to just a few years ago, are increasingly becoming more popular and are on the verge of a revival. From being referred to as 'coarse cereals', these miracle foods have been given a facelift and were notified by the Government of India as 'Nutri-Cereals' in April 2018.

This largely deserving recognition has come at a time when revival of these heritage foods is essential, given our sensitive agro-climatic situation as well as the status of nutrition & booming lifestyle diseases in the country.

Some of the millets have been grown for more than 2000-3000 years and we find references to them in our cultural & religious customs, songs and texts.

Sadly, the production of millets has not been given much attention over the years and in fact our agricultural policies over the last 40-50 years have systematically encouraged production of wheat & rice at the cost of millets and coarse cereals which have significantly reduced with time and faded into the background.

One of the key reasons for this is a reduction in the total area under millet cultivation. Data suggests that the area under millet cultivation has seen a sharp decline over the years. While in 1965-66 it stood at almost 37 million hectares, it was down to 14.72 million hectares in 2016-17.[1]

The Socio-Economic Context of Millets

Millets were considered the food of the poor due to their ability to grow even in the most marginalised of lands. This was a cereal that could be grown by everyone and eaten by everyone, unlike paddy or wheat which needed more fertile lands and more focus on irrigation and crop management. Millets were also ideal for rain-fed conditions and saline soils. As a result they were used as the main cereals in most households. However, the desire to eat more refined grains associated with social status, the drudgery of cleaning & de-hulling the minor

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Table 1: Names of Millets in Different Languages

English	Hindi	Tamil	Telugu	Kannada
Little Millet	Kutki	Samai	Samalu	Same
Barnyard Millet	Sanwa	Kuthiraivally	Udhalu	Oodhalu
Proso Millet	Chena	Pani Varagu	Variga	Baragu
Kodo Millet	Kodo	Varagu	Arikelu	Haarka
Foxtail Millet	Kangni	Tenai	Korra	Navane
Browntop Millet	Makra	Korale	Andu Korra	-
Sorghum	Jowar	Cholam	Jonna	Jola
Pearl Millet	Bajra	Kambu	Sajja	Sajje
Finger Millet (Ragi)	Mandua	Keppai	Ragulu	Ragi

millets, upward mobility & favourable policies like easy availability of wheat & paddy rice in the public distribution system also contributed to a reduction in the demand for millets.

A declining diversity in diet which was traditionally a part of our food culture had many significant impacts in terms of the nutrition status amongst women and children. Diet diversity and eating a wide range of cereals meant nutrition diversity. The focus on just wheat and paddy rice reduced nutrition in food to a large extent.

However, recent trends show a renewed interest in millets. Many millet evangelists are spreading the word about these wonder cereal crops. The government policies are also starting to reflect this renewal. Millets have been included in the public distribution system in Odisha and the government is also promoting millets under the National Food Security Act. In fact at the behest of the Indian government, the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation has approved its proposal to declare the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets.

Millets – Good for Health, Farmers, & Environment

This renewed interest in millets has been sparked by a multitude of reasons. In the current changing agro-climatic narrative across the world, it is essential that our agricultural policies see a shift from existing practices.

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Finger Millet Panicle

A study published in June 2018 has found that in the coming years there will be a reduction in production rates of various cereal crops due to climate change. The only crops that could withstand these climate vagaries and not see a negative impact on yield are millets.[2]

With this expected decrease in yield, farming livelihoods are at risk, making it imperative to move to climate resilient crops & farming to solve the double challenge of nutrition & livelihood security. Joanna Kane-Potaka, Assistant Director General, ICRISAT & Executive Director, Smart Food says, *"Millets have a double value in tackling climate change because they contribute to both adaptation and mitigation. Millets survive in much higher temperatures than most crops and can survive with much less water (1/4 of the water required by rice (Deccan Development Society). Their overall resilience makes them climate smart and a good adaptation strategy for farmers. Millets also are farmed with minimal fertilizers and pesticides, so they have a lower carbon footprint. Millets compared to rice reduces GHGs 2% to 13% (Davis, K. et al, 2019). This makes them good for the farmer and planet. Add this to their high nutrition value, making them good for you, millets are truly a Smart Food with a triple win and triple bottom line. The biggest gap is building consumer awareness."*

At the same time millets are also highly nutritious and have the potential to be a solution to the nutrition crisis facing the country. A study by International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) published in September 2019, conducted on 1500 children in Karnataka, found that children grew up to 50% more in weight and height parameters on a millet based diet.[3] This finding clearly highlights the significant potential of millets for overcoming nutritional deficiencies.

Table 2: Nutritional Profile of Millets vs. Wheat and Paddy Rice

English	Protein	Carbohydrates (In Gms)	Fat (In Gms)	Minerals (In Gms)	Fibre (In Gms)	Calcium (In MGs)	Phosphorous (In Mgs)	Iron (In MGs)	Energy (In Kcals)	Thiamin (In Mgs)	Niacin (In Mgs)
Little Millet	7.7	67	4.7	1.7	7.6	17	220	9.3	329	0.3	3.2
Barnyard Millet	6.2	65.5	4.8	3.7	13.6	22	280	18.6	300	0.33	4.2
Proso Millet	12.5	70.4	1.1	1.9	5.2	8	206	2.9	354	0.41	4.5
Kodo Millet	8.3	65.9	1.4	2.6	5.2	35	188	1.7	353	0.15	2
Foxtail Millet	12.3	60.2	4.3	4	6.7	31	290	2.8	351	0.59	3.2
Browntop Millet	8.9	71.3	1.9	3.9	8.2	28	276	7.7	338		
Sorghum	10.4	70.7	3.1	1.2	2	25	222	5.4	329	0.38	4.3
Pearl Millet	11.8	67	4.8	2.2	2.3	42	240	11	363	0.38	4.3
Finger Millet (Ragi)	7.3	72	1.3	2.7	3.6	344	283	3.9	336	0.42	1.1
Wheat	11.8	71.2	1.5	1.5	2	30	306	3.5	348	0.41	5.1
Paddy Rice	6.8	78.2	0.5	0.6	1	33	160	1.8	362	0.41	4.3

(www.millets.wordpress.com)

Millets are also being hailed as the solution for many lifestyle diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, digestive disorders, gluten allergies and much more. There are inspiring stories of diabetes reversal, children on the autism spectrum benefiting from a millet based diet and even cancer survivors who have felt the benefits of these miracle foods.

The Cultural Significance of Millets

One of the ways in which millets did survive the systemic disappearance from our tables and remained in our memory is their cultural relevance. There are many customs and rituals during which millets were made mandatory. This could be due to the health benefits experienced by our ancestors who then incorporated them into customs. For example, Barnyard Millet or *Sanwa* as it is called in Hindi was reserved for fasting as it is light and easy to digest and keeps one high on energy. Finger Millet or *Madua* Rotis are mandatory to be eaten by women in eastern Indian states of Bihar & Jharkhand before beginning a 3 day long fast for their children. Perhaps they understood that it would keep them full for longer and not cause bloating and acidity during this strenuous fast.

Millets have found their way into songs sung by women during sowing and harvesting crops. Among many communities, they are used for blessing the bride & groom during marriage ceremonies. In fact one can even find them mentioned in religious stories and day to day sayings in many languages.

India has a deep connection with millets and discussion with elders in the family, tribal communities and other guardians of traditional knowledge may reveal many more of these 'millet stories' than we currently know.

Types of Millets

There are many lost varieties of traditional millets that were grown across the country, many of which have been lost over time. With the untiring efforts of NGOs working on the ground with tribal farmers, many local and lost varieties of millets like *Batu* in Maharashtra and *Sikiya* in Madhya Pradesh are being rediscovered and conserved. However, these are yet to reach commercial production levels. At present in India, there are 9 varieties

Millet Food Platter

that are commercially available and in demand and are being grown in different pockets across the country. The nutritional profile of millets clearly reveals the value they have to offer in terms of general health & nutrition. In addition to this, millets are alkaline, high fibre and gluten free.

The Way Forward

For the past few years many companies, doctors and even chefs have been propagating the value of millets to the public. However, we are still in the early years of this millet revival and there is a long way to go.

In addition to using millets as staples, companies are also working on creating value added products to increase consumer acceptance and ease of use. Millet cookies, breakfast cereals, noodles and many other products are now available in the urban marketplaces.

Barnyard Millet or Sanwa as it is called in Hindi was reserved for fasting as it is light and easy to digest and keeps one high on energy. Finger Millet or Madua Rotis are mandatory to be eaten by women in eastern Indian states of Bihar & Jharkhand before beginning a 3 day long fast for their children.

To reap the maximum nutritional benefits from millets, it is essential to encourage them as staple foods. Government policy and entrepreneurs need to take the responsibility of ensuring that this doesn't remain as just a fad food but truly becomes a part of mainstream food habits. Millets are very versatile and can be cooked in a variety of delicious & nutritious ways.

By including more millets in our diet, we all have the power not just to take charge of our own health & immunity but also impact the climate and farmers' lives in a positive way. ❑

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Temple Inscriptions of Tamil Nadu

Pradeep Chakravarthy

There are more than 50,000 lines of inscriptions in Tamil Nadu temples. None of them are concerned with religion, philosophy or mythology. They present the diverse nature of issues that were present in around 1000 years ago in a typical Tamil Nadu village. Most inscriptions deal with local administration of land and water. They are about disputes or allocation or gifts. They give us a lot of information on how land was cultivated, how water was conserved and used. The diversity of inscriptions is such that we also get to know some social customs.

Tamil Nadu has several temples in each village. The temples in Tiruvarur, Chidambaram, Kanchipuram are massive places of worship and attract many thousand pilgrims every year and are the most important economic influencer for the community. Others like the Brihadeeswara temple of Thanjavur, are magnets of art and architecture and have won international recognition for their artistic excellence.

Most temples in the state, and surely those that are more than thousand years old have stone walls that have inscriptions carved into them. India's oldest inscriptions maybe from the Indus valley and the more famous ones may be those of Ashoka in the North, but in terms of sheer diversity of subjects and comprehensiveness of coverage of medieval India, Tamil Nadu temples have the maximum number of inscriptions.

While they have been patiently and thoroughly documented, published in Tamil and English since the 19th century, they have been discussed only in academic circles and have not found their way into school and adult learning. As a consequence, the children in a village grow up learning the history of the rest of India much more than reading of the heritage of their own village. They may know that Rajaraja was a great Chola king who built the Brihadeeswara temple but not know that he actually visited and either built or repaired the temple in their own village.

Most inscriptions deal with local administration of land and water. They are about disputes or allocation or gifts. They give us a lot of information on how land was cultivated, how water was conserved and used and, in all disputes–and there are many of them–the underlying principles seem to be swift resolution and a basic premise that individual rights are subservient to community being harmonious and that everyone living together is a non-negotiable. Also, land, food and water are seen not as rights to be enjoyed or abused but as gifts of the divine that are sacred and need to be treated with respect. A great act of merit was to construct local irrigation facilities. Sick people were respected and rewarded. In many instances, women Devadasi's funded such efforts as well. Errukangudi is a small village in Ramanathapuram District. On a slab in the village tank is an inscription from 829 CE. It praises the efforts of an Iruppaikudi Kilavan, the chief of Irunjonadu who constructed a new tank, repaired and increased the height of older bunds to increase the water stored, and even creating a new village to increase revenue for the king. He is also said to have built many Hindu and Jain temples and incorporated pillared halls in them to provide food and water. Inscriptions in Kongu Nadu are less in number but one from the Perur temple records a 1224 CE inscription of a King who ordered a new dam to be built but in a way that the older Kolur-Anai must not be affected. A 12th century inscription in Tirukoilur mentions the setting up of a shrine for Bhoomi Devi, a pavilion with a sculpture of a plough by a trade guild. The inscription mentions the code they lived by and it can be a standard for commercial organisations even today.

Errukangudi is a small village in Ramanathapuram District. On a slab in the village tank is an inscription from 829 CE. It praises the efforts of an Iruppaikudi Kilavan, the chief of Irunjonadu who constructed a new tank, repaired and increased the height of older bunds to increase the water stored, and even creating a new village to increase revenue for the king.

Temple walls also record the resolution of caste disputes. Bramhadesam in the Tambraparni banks is a magnificent temple forgotten by art lovers of the state. It has on its walls a short arbitration judgement that enjoined two castes to live peacefully for the well-being of the entire village. Another in Tirumeyyam records the partition of an entire village as the only way to end a bitter feud.

Administration in medieval Tamil Nadu was very orderly and the level of freedom local villages had was unprecedented by today's standards. A small inscription from 898 CE in the Shiva temple in Manur, Tirunelveli is of vital importance. It mentions the village land owners meeting on a night and redrafting the rules of election into the Judicial cum legislative assembly of the village.

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One of the clauses is the fining of any members who constantly obstruct the proceedings of the assembly. Read in conjunction with the more famous Uthiramerur inscription, we can deduce that electoral practices of public franchise was prevalent in Tamil Nadu long before the British "gifted" us democracy. They also show that village assemblies were not composed of old and wealthy people who gave judgements according to their whims and fancies but were qualified and elected from very stringent norms and could not hold office for life. The 10th century Tiruninravur Perumal temple inscription sheds more light on the terms of office and how in some occasion legislature and judicial functions were different. Violations were as high as 25 kalanjus of gold.

In Tirumukkudal, not far from Kanchi, the Perumal temple had a hospital attached to it. The lengthy and perfectly engraved inscription that spans the entire length of the temple mentions a massive land grant by Rajendra Chola in 1068 CE.

Some inscriptions mention hospitals/medical colleges and educational institutions supported by temples. Inscriptions give us a lot of detailed information on their functioning and income. The Matha in Tiruvottiyur was so well-known that the King of Valluvanad in Kerala, called Vallabha, renounced the world and moved to Tiruvottiyur to head the Matha as Chaturanana Pandita. It was said that he took this decision since he was overcome with guilt that he could not fight with his dear friend Rajaditya who was killed by the Rashtrakuta King Krishna III in Takolam in 949 CE. The Narasimha temple at Ennayiram had a large school that received a large grant from Rajendra I in celebration of his victories in the north. Another gift of Rajadhiraja is also recorded. In the first, 13 teachers of the vedas, logic and philosophy are recorded. In the second, 19 teachers of many more branches of philosophy are recorded.

In Tirumukkudal, not far from Kanchi, the Perumal temple had a hospital attached to it. The lengthy and perfectly engraved inscription that spans the entire length of the temple mentions a massive land grant by Rajendra Chola in 1068 CE. There was a Vedic and Agama teaching institution employing at least 14 teachers and a hostel for the boys. The boys were allowed to have a hot water, oil bath every Saturday. They slept on mats and had night lamps. There was male and female staff for the hostel. There were at least 7 staff in the hospital, including a surgeon, a barber who was the local village doctor of those days and a chief doctor called Savarnan Kodandaraman Aswattama Bhattan. The patients were given meals and the list of medicines in the pharmacy is fascinating and lengthy– remarkably many are still used in Ayurveda today.

The diversity of inscriptions is such that we get to know some social customs. A 1425 CE inscription in the Vrinchipuram Shiva temple mentions how there had by then been a corrupt practice among the Brahmins of the bridegroom's father paying money to the bride's father. Based on lengthy deliberations with members of the community from Karnataka, Telugu, Tamil and Kerala regions, it was decided to punish those who gave or received such gifts. The most severe punishment for Brahmins was excommunication and this was also listed. The Vedaranyam temple has an inscription from 1218 AD which tell us of an "*aal vilai pramanam*" or a sale deed of slaves. A guardian officer from the army of a village sold 15 slaves to the temple for 1000 kasu.

The Vedaranyam temple has an inscription from 1218 AD which tell us of an "aal vilai pramanam" or a sale deed of slaves. A guardian officer from the army of a village sold 15 slaves to the temple for 1000 kasu.

Many inscriptions mention land rights. An inscription from Tirukolakudi mentions how the temple leased out barren land to a local farmer. He agreed to take it but asked for a tax rebate since it would take him time to bring the land up to cultivation. In that, we get a list of the kind of crops that were grown in that time. In another inscription from Piranmalai, the traders agree to settle tolls on their produce to the temple. Some of the common produce traded in that time are- salt, paddy (unhusled rice), rice, green gram, flat beans, tuvar dhal, castor seeds, areca nuts, pepper, turmeric, dried ginger, onion, mustard, cumin seed, gooseberry, beleric myrobalans (used for construction), iron, cotton, thread, thick cloth, thin cloth, a fine thread, wax, gunny cloth, sandal wood, honey, Agil cedar wood, silk, rose water, human hair for wigs, camphor oil, khol, civet oil, Javvadhu (an intensely fragrant plant), healthy cows, horses and elephants.

In addition, there are many inscriptions that we will never know about, since they are lost in renovations. One hopes that future generations examine ways to bring these into history text books and every temple has the inscriptions preserved but also have simple translations displayed in Tamil and English for the benefit of the locals and the public. ❑

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Harmony Through Dance

Veena Mani

Dance has always been a way to reach out to the masses. It has been a means to bring stories written in the Puranas and the Vedas to those who did not have access to these texts. Right from ancient times, dance has always been a means of interaction and a feedback system. Dance was patronised by kings. Whether folk dance or classical dance, it is mostly about telling stories both-spiritual and moral.

While eight classical dance forms are recognised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, there are folk dances as well in India. Some of these art forms are a form of entertainment as well. These diverse forms are best seen all in one stage at the Republic Day parade, where India's cultural diversity is celebrated. The classical dance forms are Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathak, Mohinattam, Kathakali, Sattriya, Odissi and Manipuri. These dance forms are not limited to the region they originated from. Bharatanatyam and other southern dance forms are as popular in the north as they are in the south. The same is the case with Kathak, Odissi and other art forms from the north that are also famous in the south.

Dance has always been patronised by the kings of the region. One example of unity and diversity lies in the story of Kuchipudi. One of the foremost and perhaps key patrons of Kuchipudi, the art form from Andhra Pradesh was the Nawab of Golconda, Abul Hasan Qutb Shah. In the 17th century, this art form was dying. That was when the Nawab gifted these dancers a whole village which is now called Kuchipudi. Kuchipudi dancers are called Bhagavatulu because their dance-dramas are about the Hindu God, Vishnu. Their themes are episodes from the Bhagavata Purana.

Traditional Sabdams where stories are narrated, often about kings, sometimes even end with a 'Salam', like in the Manduka Sabdam which narrates the story of Gajendra Moksham. This Sabdam narrates the story of how the king of the elephants is saved by Lord Vishnu. While a Muslim king patronised an art-form pursued only by the Brahmins in the Krishna District, these brahmin performers incorporated a word largely associated with Muslims in their repertoire. The sabdam is considered one of the most important pieces in the Kuchipudi repertoire.

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1. *Kuchipudi from Andhra Pradesh, a dance-drama tradition, it is known for its grace and fluid movements;*
2. *Bharatnatyam, a more than 2000 years old dance form of Tamil Nadu;*
3. *Kathakali, Kerala, a stylised art form, it is a blend of dance, music and acting and dramatises stories from epics;*
4. *Sattriya, Assam, the dance is an artistic way of presenting mythological teachings in an enjoyable manner;*
5. *Mohiniyattam, Kerala, performed by women, it is known for its delicate body movements and subtle facial expressions;*
6. *Manipuri dance from Manipur, it is a devotional dance form with references to creators of universe;*
7. *Odissi from Odisha, it is a dance of love and passion touching on the divine and the human, the sublime and the mundane;*
8. *Kathak popular in North India, represents a unique synthesis of Hindu and Muslim genius in art.*

While the above example shows coming together of two religious groups, Kuchipudi has also broken gender stereotypes. Only men were Kuchipudi performers. As they travelled from one village to the other to perform, these men took on female roles as well. This is called 'stree vesham'. They played characters like Satyabhama and Rukmini. They dressed like women while playing these characters.

With globalisation, dance also evolved. It started breaking regional and linguistic barriers. Instead of choosing the language of the area from where the art form originated, dancers have begun to choose tunes in other languages, for example, choosing a Tarana to perform in Bharatanatyam or Kuchipudi. It could also be choosing a social cause and portraying it in any dance form. Such diversification and evolution had made dance forms of one region relatable to people from another. I am a Tamilian who grew up in Delhi and have taken up the dance form of Andhra as a profession. While each dance-form has its own distinguished style and characteristics, the sheer fact that every art form is presented to tell stories, helps break gender and linguistic barriers.

Krishna's Raas Leela is an important topic for Kathak dancers. From Holi in Braj Bhumi to his encounter with the demon Kansa, Kathak dancers celebrate Krishna a great deal. Just like Kuchipudi, Kathak too was patronised by Muslim rulers in the northern part of India and is very prominent in north India. The 19th century is considered the golden period for Kathak. It was during this time that Nawab Wajid Ali Shah patronised Kathak and that's how the Lucknow Gharana was established. Kathak, again, patronised by Muslim kings is a style that has a wide range of pieces on Krishna and Radha and other Hindu Gods.

With time, various dance forms started making compositions from other dance forms part of their performances. Ashtapadis are central pieces in Odissi. Now, a wide number of Ashtapadis are choreographed in Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi. Ashtapadis are used in these two forms from the south by artistes when they are looking to showcase their command over Abhinaya. Ashtapadis have become an integral part of the repertoire

An expression by Birju Maharaj , the leading exponent of Lucknow Kalka-Bindadin gharana of Kathak dance in India.

in both Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi. Artists relate to Jayadeva's Ashtapadis as they talk about Krishna's Leela. One of the Ashtapadis widely done is 'Rase Hari Miha Vihita Vilasam'. In Bharatanatyam, the choreography of this Ashtapadi in Kalakshetra style is very well-known.

Social themes are also being explored by dancers to reach a wider audience. Gandhian philosophies and works of Rabindranath Tagore are used by dancers widely. We see Gandhi being used as a subject a lot by Bharatanatyam, Odissi and other classical dancers. Dance festivals are also being organised based on Gandhi's philosophies. Rabindranath Tagore's classic work Chandalika has been adapted by artists of various dance forms like Padmabhushan Late Dr Vempati Chinna Satyam's adaptation of the classic. Theri choreographies have carried the story of untouchability and its impact on society far and wide to both Indian and global audiences.

Dancers have also begun to choose contemporary themes in order to reach the masses. In all of this, the Ministry of Culture has a major role to play. Its autonomous body, Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT), through its extension programme organises lecture demonstrations in schools and colleges so that even the underprivileged get exposure to the cultural diversity in India. School and college students are taught about various dance forms in India through the extension programme.

The CCRT also organises workshops for teachers to sensitise them about the arts so that they can get their students to pursue art. Scholarship holders are invited by the CCRT to perform on the same stage which gives them the exposure to other art forms as well.

Cultural grants are given to institutions and individuals to create infrastructure and also come up with dance productions in the eight dance forms recognised by the central Sangeet Natak Akademi, in the traditional format, yet appeal to the masses rather than just certain target groups. We cannot ignore the contribution of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in bringing a diverse group of people to learn Indian classical dance forms. The ICCR provides scholarships to people from other countries to learn these dance forms. While this scholarship brings the student to the teacher, the ICCR also sends dance teachers to its centres across the globe to teach students based in those countries. Such provisions have helped nurture talent in countries like Russia and Bali.

Apart from these institutions, festivals like Bharat Parv, festivals organised by various state governments like the Khajuraho Dance Festival, Konark Dance Festival, Mamallapuram Dance Festival provide an opportunity to showcase India's diverse art forms, all on one stage. Because the themes are usually the unifying factor, a fusion of various dance forms is possible. So, an Odissi dancer, Kuchipudi dancer and a Kathak dancer can come together to show Krishna's Leelas or the descent of Ganga or even the concept of Ardhanarishwara. Unity lies in diversity, for dancers.

Festivals of India Abroad also play an important role in spreading cultural diversity. All

Raja and Radha Reddy, credited with giving Kuchipudi a new dimension while retaining traditional sensibilities.

Kalamandalam Gopi, a living legend, known for the romantic and dramatic portrayal of roles in Kathakali.

When west meets east! Jhaveri sisters from Gujarat are known for popularising Manipuri dance

our Indian dance forms–classical and folk have found a platform. The government has empanelled artistes for these festivals and these artistes perform in foreign countries.

While these scholarships and funding help those interested in learning or following an art, Doordarshan airs shows on dance on their national channel as well as their regional channels. This has helped dance reach those in the rural areas. Regional channels of the Doordarshan do not focus only on the dance form of that region. They also call artists from various other dance forms that do not necessarily belong to that region. National channel of Doordarshan also picks up content from the regions.

While government bodies like CCRT do their bit to spread culture, NGOs also play a vital role in spreading this cultural diversity. NGOs like Indian International Rural Cultural Centre (IRCEN) conduct lecture demonstrations and workshops in schools across the country. Centre for Cultural Studies and Development (CCSD) has also been organising workshops for teacher trainees. This annual workshop has also been well received across states where they have been held. While some lecture demonstrations and workshops are self-funded by these NGOs others are partially or fully funded by the Ministry of Culture.

Due to all these efforts, Indian dance forms have found their place in the world map. The Chennai Marghazi season; which is a festival season for dance and music, is so famous that artistes from across the world want to perform during the season. There are dancers from various parts of the world who come to Chennai, stay here, perform, look for opportunities in other parts of India as well. They stay in India for close to two months not just to perform but also to stay with gurus and learn the nuances of the art forms they practice.

For anyone interested in studying about various art forms in India, the Sangeet Natak Akademi at the centre and various state Sangeet Natak Akademis have archives. These archives can be accessed by anyone and

Bapuram Barbayan Atai, born in 1887, he was a leading exponent in the traditions of the Assamese dance – Sattriya

Kelucharan Mohapatra
The Odissi dance guru is credited with revival of the classical dance form in the 20th century

Rukmini Devi Arundale
She is revered for her contribution to the renaissance of Bharatanatyam and classical music

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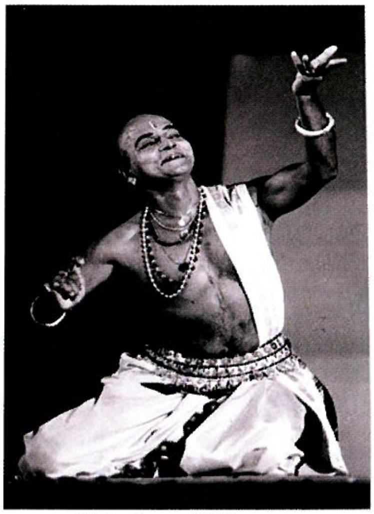

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get to understand India's diverse cultural heritage. CCRT too has a library that can be accessed by anyone. CCRT's documentation department does have video clippings of their initiatives which can be referred to understand India's cultural heritage.

The use of gestures, is a form that can be understood by everyone. Hand gestures are the common code language that makes it possible for everyone to understand, erasing language barriers. If you begin to analyse hand gestures, these are not very different from what you use in your everyday life. Take for instance, 'Anjali' hasta is the normal 'Namaste' used by all of us. Most of the hastas are just known by the common man by different names. 'Kartarimukha' is the head of scissors. It is known as 'katri' in some south Indian languages. Kartari is the sanskrit word for scissors. Not just the use of hand gestures, facial expressions used in all Indian dance forms also make it easy and relatable to all across the globe. This is perhaps why we have foreigners learning Indian dance forms. This way dance has the ability to bring people from diverse cultures and backgrounds together.

Storytelling is just one part of dance. Pure dance is an integral part as well. Dance forms like Karagattam in the south and Bhangra in the north are known for their energetic moves. These moves can be enjoyed by anyone, irrespective of the culture they belong to.

> Dancers have also begun to choose contemporary themes in order to reach the masses. In all of this, the Ministry of Culture has a major role to play. Its autonomous body, Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT), through its extension programme organises lecture demonstrations in schools and colleges so that even the underprivileged get exposure to the cultural diversity in India. School and college students are taught about various dance forms in India through the extension programme.

A pose in Bharatanatyam, dancer wearing ornaments including ghungroo.

Dance also brings in cultural diversity because of the interdependence of dancers on people from other walks of life. Pots and plates of various kinds used by dancers as props are made by a metalsmith. Since dancers require costumes, there is a considerable amount of interaction with weavers. In this manner, dance becomes a melting pot of diverse cultures where people from different professions contribute to the end product which is the dance-drama or a pure dance number. It is not merely show biz. Dance helps boost the economy. Costumes are made of traditional fabric which gives weavers like those in Kanchipuram, a livelihood. Not just dance costumes but also practice costumes also give weavers a livelihood.

Jewelry too is a very important part of a dancer's life. Here too, dance has broken barriers. Temple jewelry makers are not just Hindus. Some are Muslims as well. Chennai's oldest and one of the world's most renowned dance jewelry maker Kalanjiam Brothers follow Islam. Kalanjiam Brothers has been the one-stop-shop for over 50 years for dancers. Now, they even export dance temple jewelry to countries like the US. Ankle bells or Ghungroo is perhaps the most important thing for any dancer. Makers of these Ghungroos benefit when a dancer performs. This is how dance brings together people from different walks of life, different cultures. Dance has been a unifying element in a world divided and diversified by various issues like social status, religion, language and culture. ❑

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YE-AUGUST/2020

Weaving National Honour

Basavaprabhu Hosakeri

Garag, a village near Dharwad in north Karnataka, is synonymous with tiranga-the Indian tricolour. The village once was an epicenter of patriotism during the British regime and was highly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi. Seeking to keep the nationalist spirit alive, several freedom fighters from Dharwad banded in 1956 to form the Dharwad Taluk Seva Sangha (erstwhile name of the center)- a non-profit Khadi producing unit. Perhaps this atmosphere has laid foundation for Khadi making in the village. In the beginning simple Khadi was being produced. However, in late 60s, when shortage of national flag cloth in the country was felt, Garag Khadi center plunged into flag making. In early 70s, the center took-up flag making on full-time basis. The spinners here spin threads of patriotism and weavers weave cloth of national honour.

Dharwad Taluk Garag Kshetriya Seva Sangha is a khadi production center mainly involved in production of certified National Flag cloth. The center is a Regd. Society working under the aeges of Khadi & Village Industries Commission, Govt. of India, since 1956.

Weaving flag cloth is not an easy task, as all specifications laid down for flag making need to be adhered to a strict code practice. Firstly, indigenous

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cotton is brought from government run sliver unit in Chitradurga, which is hand spun into threads on new model Charkha. Later, using mixture of maida, natural resin and neem it is starched for the perfect texture. The threads are then coiled on to a bobbin and the weavers wind the warp on a beam, before hand weaving the cloth.

There are numerous institutions producing Khadi in the country. Then, how come this center stands apart, amongst all those? It is so because; the weavers here are weaving national honour and not a mere cloth. The Garag Khadi unit is the only center which has been recognised by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for producing national flag cloth, since 1975. Our former President of the center, Shankar Rao Kurtakotiji brought this great assignment from Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and it succeeded in reaching the stringent target of meeting the standards. From then onwards, the center hasn't seen back.

Every year about 35-40 thousand meters of Khadi is being produced in the center. Out of which, 25-30 thousand meters is flag cloth only. The center has about 250 spinners and about 50 weavers, spread over nearby 7 villages. The flag cloth production amounts to Rs. 1.2 to 1.5 crores every year.

As per the KVIC specifications, the fabric that is being used for making national flag shall comply the norms prescribed by the BIS. The spinners and weavers are specially trained for the purpose. The cloth produced are processed for colour and stitching at Mumbai. Our BIS flags will be supplied mostly to Central/State Govt. Secretariats, Establishments, Armed forces, Embassies etc. The tricolor which flutters atop on Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament House, Red Fort, Supreme Court, State Assemblies and such other places, comes from Garag.

Every year about 35-40 thousand meters of Khadi is being produced in this centre in Karnataka. Out of which, 25-30 thousand meters is flag cloth only. The center has about 250 spinners and about 50 weavers, spread over nearby 7 villages. The flag cloth production amounts to Rs. 1.2 to 1.5 crores every year.

The flag cloth prepared here has 40 warps and 38 wefts of 36 counts thread made from fine Jaidhar cotton. Each square meter of cloth weighs 205 grams + or - 5 to 10 grams. After weaving, the cloth is sent to Mumbai Khadi Dyers & Printers, where it is dyed and stitched into National flag. Further, final produce will be verified for ISI specifications. The weavers are given systematic training to confirm quality. For spinners training is simple.

Every weaver earns from Rs. 300/- to 500/- per day, accordingly spinners earn Rs. 300/- to 400/- per day. Due to industrialisation nearby, youths are not coming to Khadi work, thus every year center offers training in weaving, on stipend basis. But still, youths are not making-up their mind, as they may get similar amount, without much labour in industry. Nevertheless, traditionally, families accustomed to Khadi in the villages are committed to the work. In both spinning and weaving, women are dominant.

National flags are made in 9 different sizes; out of those, 6 sizes get the Bureau of Indian Standards mark. These flags range between 14x21 feet (the biggest) and 2x3 feet (the smallest). The center sends most of the flags to Khadi Bhavan, New Delhi, from where flags reach other parts of the country.

There were few Khadi units in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu earlier but they have closed down. Off late, our neighboring counter-part Hubballi Khadi center is also into this assignment. On October 12th, 2019 India Post, in Karnapex 2019 held at Mangalore, has released a special cover of our center, to commemorate the same.

Mahatma firmly believed that in our country, after agriculture, it is Khadi alone which can provide all-season employment, at places at the workers door step, in a decentralised manner, without polluting environment and checking urbanisation and its evils successfully. ❑

Memorial Stones of Jammu & Kashmir

Dr Lalit Gupta

A myriad variety of Memorial Stones are found scattered in most parts, especially historical villages and settlements of Jammu and Kashmir. Watched and respected and at times neglected, these stones filling the landscape are unique documents of social memory. Silent chronicles of historical, socio-cultural and religious events and the people, hundreds of such memorial stones in Jammu and Kashmir remain undocumented and unprotected.

Memory is a deep human emotion. There has always existed a culture of memorialisation. One such noticeable expression is seen in the pan-Indian ancient practice of erecting the memorial stones to commemorate important events and persons.

Memorial Stones of Kashmir

The earliest examples of memorial stones recorded from Kashmir date back to circa 2nd-3rd century CE. Seen in every nook and corner of the Valley, these memorial stones reflect a widespread practice based on the tenets of 'hero worship' as well as 'ritual death' like 'Praya' and Sati. Thanks to Pandit Kalhana's Rajatarangini, the 11th century chronicle of Kashmir Kings, that we get a clear idea as to how Sati[1] and Prāyopaveśa[2] by Purohits[3] were institutionalised in Kashmir since the early historic period.

The widespread practice of raising memorial stones seems to have been discontinued after Muslim rule in the 14th century. The extant examples from early historic times to 14th century show that memorial stones as an edifice were non-sepulchral and purely commemorative in character, raised in memory or honour of the deceased.

Memorial Stones of Jammu

One of three divisions of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu region is the name given to the part of the outermost hills of the Himalayas that stretch from Himachal Pradesh to the Pothawar in Pakistan. The region can be found on the Atlas roughly between 32° 17́ to 36° 58́ North Latitude to 73° 26́ and 83° 30́ East Longitude.

Known in the Puranas as Darva-Abhisāra and situated between the ancient Madhya Desha on the one hand and the Gandhara on the other, the region, since ancient times has been an active meeting point for diverse socio-cultural races, different religious beliefs and varying art traditions. Marked by natural boundaries of river Ravi in the east and the river Jhelum in the west, the area of Jammu has played

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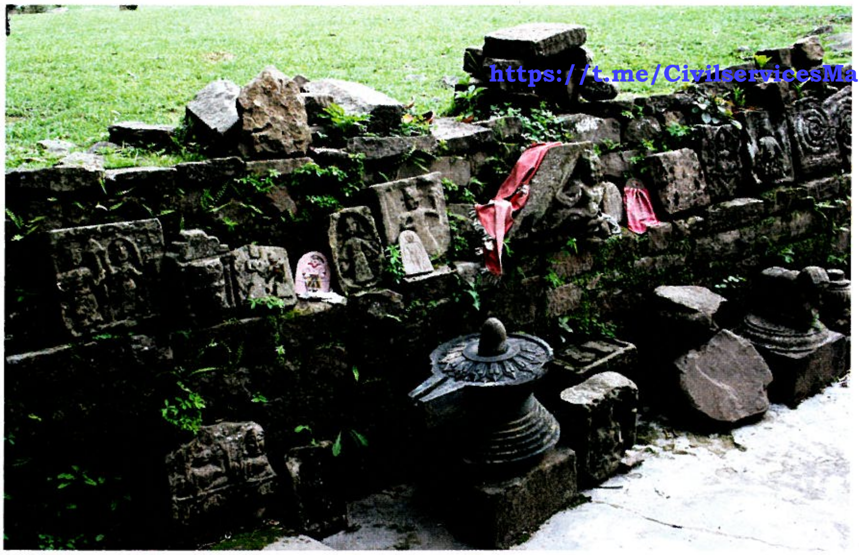
The author is an art historian and columnist. He is Former Faculty, Department of Art History, Institute of Music and Fine Arts, University of Jammu and is the writer of the book 'Intangible Heritage of Jammu'. Email: lalitguptajammu@gmail.com an important link in spreading the religious and cultural ideas from Indian mainland to Central Asia via Kashmir Valley.

The archaeological evidences found right from Paleolithic period to Indus Valley Culture, through Indo-Greek, Mauryan, Kushaṇa and Gupta eras, early medieval kingdoms, the formation of Rajput states, Moughal supremacy, the period of Pathan dominance and the British rule, speak of a perennial flow of culture in the region of Jammu.

Due to its strategic location, the region, while being a part of the pan-Indian ethos, also imbibed influences which came in the form of numerous waves of migrating tribes from the north and north-west. With the result, the Himalayan interiors of Jammu have been serving as a propitious place for the flowering and fusion of diverse socio-cultural and artistic traditions.

Notwithstanding the diversity of races and ethnic communities which included the races from the hoary past such as Pishaca, Naga, Kinnara, Gandharva, along with races from the early historic period like Audumbara, Madra, Vahlika, Darva, Abhisara, Yavana, Saumantikas, Kiras et al, the Jammu region's socio-cultural legacy which is seen in the shape of a living tradition of folklore, music, and art, reflects the typical socio-cultural milieu wherein man and the environment; the lands, pastures, cattle, birds all are woven into an organic whole..

Found all over Jammu region, memorial stones provide an insight into the ethnic character, customs, belief and practices of Dogras, who have a distinct identity, language and traditional mode of living. Despite continuous political instability in the area since ancient times, when it came to social mores the martial communities of Dogras adhered to a set of values with its emphasis on valour, honour and chivalry. The valiant deeds of such martyrs recounted from generation to generation are part of living folklore. Many ballads and songs sung by the folk singers called as *Gardi*, *Yogi* and *Daraes*, are a characteristic feature of Jammu folklife.



In the historic context, the most frequently found type is that of Hero/ Warrior Stones which as part of pan-Indian practice are raised in honour of warriors. Locally called as *mohras*, these memorial stones are invariably found near a water source like ponds and *baolies*-the freshwater springs and especially in the post-17th century freshwater springs.

In such stones, the hero is shown either riding a horse or standing. He and his horse are shown wearing armour. The hero usually holds a lance or a sword. In another variety, the hero is also shown as standing and holding a sword and a shield. In another type, the hero is depicted along with a Sati who generally rides a palanquin carried by bearers, while the hero rides a horse.

Found all over Jammu region, memorial stones provide an insight into the ethnic character, customs, belief and practices of Dogras, who have a distinct identity, language and traditional mode of living.

Types of Mohras

Other types of hero stones are the commemorative tablets of legendary folk heroes like Baba Jitto, Data Ranpat, Mian Dido et al. Yet another most prevalent type of memorial stones in Jammu region are those of Satis, Kuldevis, Kuldevtas and Shaheeds. These are not ancestor stones in the strict sense but tenets of the ancient cult of ancestor worship and associated rituals have contributing towards such memorials—a practice in vogue even today.

Sati Stones

The *'Mohras'* of ladies called as *Satis, Shilvantis, Syabatis* are one of the most commonly found forms of memorial stones. This category of memorial stones relate to the age-old practice where women used to immolate; with her dead husband (*Sahagamana*) or after receiving the news of the death of her husband (*Anugamana*), or at the death of a brother, son or any other hero or to save her honour or of the family, clan, village or for some social cause.

Such stones depict a figure of standing women holding a *kalasha* in one hand while the other hand is raised quite high. Sometimes, in later varieties, she is even shown holding a fan in her one hand.

Concept of Hatya

The memorial stones also are raised in the honour of a dead ancestor, or one who has died an unnatural death or died for a cause or all those whose spirits demand setting up of a *mohra*. The wish of the spirit of the dead to set up *a mohra* so that it rests in peace or appeased is known through dreams of a family member or a relative or all those who get affected by the turn of untoward events in their day to life and linked with the wandering spirit. The ultimate confirmation is done through a ritual of *'jatar'* or '*kan cchatna*', where a medium called as *dayala* or *doala* goes into a trance at the request of the affected party and makes known the wish of the dead spirit by a spiritual communion. This particular shamanistic belief is a commonplace factor of the life of the Dogras.

Memorials for the Childless

Another form of memorial stones which were raised in the past was for those family members who die as childless. Locally called as *'autar' mohras*, in these memorial stones a half-standing man with a folded hand is shown. These stones are not kept inside the house as there is no one to remember them. These *mohras* are worshipped on special sacred days and festivals. The stone is washed and *tilak* of *sindhoor* is applied to it. Some portion of new crop or food made for happy occasions is first offered to it, as he is also a shareholder of the family land.

Time Frame

Unlike memorials stones of Kashmir some of which are also inscribed, no inscriptions on the memorial stones of Jammu region has been reported so far. While the practice of raising memorial stones dwindled at a fast pace with the advent of Muslim rule in the Valley, surprisingly raising of memorials stones seems to have proliferated in Jammu region after the 15th-16th century and continues till today as a living tradition.

Hero/Warrior Stones are raised in honour of warriors. Locally called as mohras, these memorial stones are invariably found near a water source like ponds and baolies-the freshwater springs and especially in the post-17th century freshwater springs.

Form and Style

Jammu memorial stones exhibit two distinct varieties. One which in continuation to the pan-Indian tradition is three-dimensional structures shaped like a miniature temple to be viewed frontally. Such tall stones fashioned like a small temple are divided into three segments. The lower register depicts the dramatis personae while its upper part tapers into a conical spire. Such examples dateable between 14th to 17th centuries are mostly reported from upper reaches of Jammu region.

Another variety is of those stones that are in the shape of a rectangular relief. The dimensions mostly range from three to four feet to smaller versions which measure between two to one and a half feet.

As far as the artistic style of the carvings on the memorial stones of Jammu is concerned, one finds an amazing variety with a range from semi-classical to folk. But as a rule, the early examples seem to have been carved by sculptors well versed in 'Margi' traditions entrenched in aesthetics of Shilpa Shashtra. But in later day examples, a gradual predominance of the folk idiom is noticeable.

Conclusion

Presently, memorial stones are mostly seen placed in open on raised platforms under trees, near a source of water such as ponds, springs, temples or housed in special memorial structure locally called as Dehris. *Mohras* are also kept in courtyards of temples. Some of the well-known places like Baba Jitto's temple at Chiri, near Jammu and its surrounding area like *Babe da Tlaa,* are strewn with hundreds of *dehris* of *kuldevtas* or *kuldevis* of different communities, castes and clans. Here people congregate annually/ bi-annually or on special, occasions like after son's marriage or mundan ceremony of a child. The newlywed couple and the child with the tonsured head are brought here to take blessings of *kuldevta* or the *kuldevi's* enshrined as a mohra in the dehri. Some families go to the *dehris* of their *kul devtas/ devis* with a lot of fanfare, in the form of a procession along with a band playing music and drums.

With fast-changing socio-cultural scenario wherein large scale migrations from villages to urban centres are taking place, the construction of memorial structures and stones is on the wane. Memorials stones are now no more created by traditional carvers locally called as '*Batede*' or '*Slaede*', as these families have abandoned their ancestral trade. Instead, masons, carpenters are making stones as either simplified and crude carvings of human forms or in a popular style and a medium like marble, concrete where figures are incised with a stylus and coloured with emulsion, thus presenting a total contrast from the past practice.

A large body of memorial stones and structures dotting the nooks and corners of the Jammu region, especially those carved on the friezes of enclosing walls of ancient springs are important socio-cultural documents awaiting a thorough study and exposition in terms of distribution, typology and style.

Endnotes

1. Rajatarangini is full of instances which confirm that Sati was widely practised in Kashmir, *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, (Tr.) M.A. Stein, Motilal Banarsi Dass. Delhi, Reprint 2009) Some of the instances are: vi,107, queen Trilokayadevi followed her husband in death; 195- enceinte rani stopped from getting sati by the prime minister; vii. 103 saintly Bimba, daughter-in-law of Tunga and daughter of the royal Sahi entered the flames, 481-mentions that the servants and liegemen and liegewomen of queen also had sought voluntary death by burning by fire; 1380---mentions Gajja entered the funeral pyre.; Viii 363, mentions the burning of Uccla's queens Jayamati and Bijjila.
2. Prayopavesha or Praya was a solemn fast undertaken by Brahmin priests or Purohits as means of protest against a royal decision or policy. This protest many times ended up with self-immolation by protesting Brahmins.. Prayopavesha or Praya to which they (Purohits in ancient Kashmir) were apt to resort in critical circumstances, were evidently powerful means of coercion which weak rulers had reasons to dread. *Kalhana's Rājataraŋginī*, (Tr.) M.A. Stein, Motilal Banarsi Dass. Delhi, Reprint 2009. Vol II, p. 533. There is mention of many such instances: iv.82, 99 v. 468; vi. 25, 336, 343; vii 13, 1088, 1157, 1161; viii. 51, 110, 658, 709, 768, 808, 939, 2224, 2733, 2739; officers watching cases of, vi. 14; Kalhana's views on, I. 36.
3. Purohits or Brahmin priests were an influential class of old Kashmir. They were organized into corporations (praṣada) at all the more important shrines and pilgrimage places and often possessed of great endowments. They due to their baneful interference played more than once an important role in the internal policies of Kashmir.

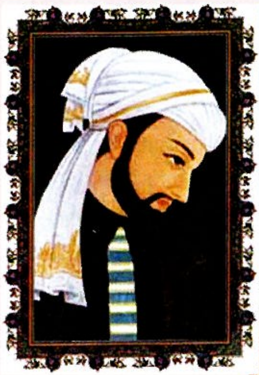
KALEIDOSCOPE

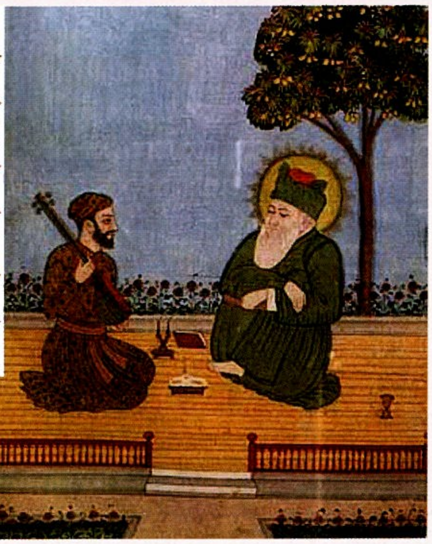
Kalaripayattu- Kerala

Kalaripayattu is the martial art originated and popularly practiced in Kerala. Mythology has it that the warrior sage Parasurama is the promulgator of Kalaripayattu. Kalari is the Malayalam word for a traditionally built gymnasium to teach the martial art known as Payattu. The four stages of Payattu are: a) Maippayattu - Body conditioning exercises b) Kolthari - Use of wooden weapons c) Angathari- Use of sharp metallic weapons d) Verumkai - Bare-handed defense and attack. Women also underwent training in Kalaripayattu, and still do so to this day. Following are the major ethnic style of Kalaripayattu existing in the three regions of northern Kerala (Malabar). 1) Vattenthirippu Style 2) Arappukkai Style 3) Pillathangi Style.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Compositions of Ameer Khusro- Delhi





Abúl Hasan Yamin al-Din Khusro, known as Ameer Khusro Dehlawi is an iconic figure in the cultural history of India. He was a musician, scholar and poet, a Sufi Mystic and Spiritual disciple of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi. He enriched Hindustani classical music with Persian and Arabic elements, from which originated various styles in Hindustani Classical music, such as Khayal, Tarana, Savela, Chaturang, Tirvat, Sadrah, Talan, Tilenana, Qaul, Qalbana, Naqsh-o-gul, Naqsh-o-nigaar, Rang, Mandha, Dhamal, Sawan geet, etc. The invention of the Tabla and Sitar is also traditionally attributed to Amir Khusro. He wrote his poetic expressions in Hindavi. The traditional, authentic and real Sufi music based on Ameer Khusro's poetry is a rare treasure of Dilli Gharana. Some compositions of Ameer Khusro also find popular expression in the form of sawan geet.

Territorial Security - India-China Relations

Dr Srikanth Kondapalli

Territorial security has been a contentious issue between India and China. As new nation states in the late 1940s, and as successive states for the previous empires, viz., the British Indian and Qing dynasty, India and China inherited the undefined boundaries. Despite several rounds of discussions between the then British empire and the Qing dynasty officials, and since independence by the successive leaderships, the territorial limits have neither been defined, delineated nor demarcated, posing concerns or even conflict between India and China.

In this backdrop, the recent tensions simultaneously at Naku La in Sikkim and Pangong Tso and Galwan in the western sector of the border since 5 May 2020 have once again highlighted the territorial security aspects of the India-China relations. The incidents in the western sector, have led to the "premeditated and planned" killing of Indian soldiers at Galwan region on 15 June 2020 , highlighting the dangers of unresolved territorial dispute between the two large Asian countries.

Since their early years after independence in the late 1940s, both India and China are concerned with the territorial security. Indeed, both have been sensitive on this issue in their dealing with one another as well as with other states. India's continental territorial boundaries are with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and through maritime boundaries with Sri Lanka. Earlier, in the 1970s, it had resolved the maritime boundaries with Thailand and Indonesia. While many continental and maritime issues are raising recently, none except with Pakistan have become troublesome. Even with Pakistan, there has come to be a Line of Control that is recognised by both sides.

In the case of China, it had resolved 12 out of 14 continental borders, except with India and Bhutan, although it has not been able to resolve the maritime disputes with all of its relevant neighbours like Korea, Japan, Southeast Asian countries which have become acute recently. On the continental territorial security, however, China's recent revival of claims over the Russian far eastern city of Vladivostok (termed as Haishenwei by Chinese and recently by a journalist Shen Shiwei as an "unequal treaty") had ruffled feathers in Russia.

Likewise, China's popular websites toutiao.com claimed the whole of Kyrgyzstan as a part of China historically, while sohu.com stated that Kazakhstan is located on China's territories. In relation to Bhutan, as well, China had extended its claim and objected to Bhutan applying for an environmental project at Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary at Trashigang district in eastern Bhutan. In the previous 24 border talks between the two countries between 1984 and 2016, China did not mention about this claim.

This suggests that China has been making extended claims to territories far and wide and reflects an expansionist mindset and the pressures of nationalism at home. These are also impacting on China's forays into the Line of Actual Control (LAC) areas with India as reflected in border incidents of Depsang Plains in April-May 2013, Chumar in 2014 and 2015, Dokhlam crisis of 2017 and the recent incidents in the western sector and Sikkim.

In the period when China was focusing on its rise, it had agreed to a series of mechanisms such as 1993 "peace and tranquillity" agreement, 1996 confidence building measures (CBMs) in the military field, 2005 protocols on not carrying arms, 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement on not "tailing" the patrols on the borders. In addition, a Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination is for maintaining peace and tranquillity on the borders. It had met 15 times since its establishment in 2012. All of these are aimed at preventing conflict and managing the border stability issues.

However, the killing of 20 Indian soldiers on 15 June has altered the equation between the two countries. For the first time after 1962 border clashes, 1967 Sikkim incident and 1975 Tulungla incident in Arunachal Pradesh which witnessed casualties, 2020 shattered the image of peace and tranquil borders between the two countries. Again, the large scale mobilisation of armed forces closer

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to the LAC (estimated to be over 2 divisions each) also went beyond the past protocols requirements mentioned above.

After the fisticuffs incident since 5 May, military commanders on both sides met on 6 June, 2020 and 22 June, 2020 and at the Special Representative level on 5 July, 2020. They decided to implement procedures for disengagement and de-escalation between the two armed forces. However, as 6 June disengagement process has not been implemented resulting in the 15 June killing of army personnel, it was felt that the intervention of the political leadership was felt necessary to bind the armed forces.

At the 5 July, 2020 talks between the two Special Representatives it was decided to implement "earliest complete disengagement" between the two countries troops on the western sector. The announcement expected "full restoration of peace" on the borders with "phased and step-wise" disengagement and de-escalation process. They further stated that both "should respect and observe the line of actual control and should not take any unilateral action to alter the status quo" on the borders. If these measures are implemented then we may witness temporary truce on the borders.

A permanent solution to the territorial security between India and China will have to wait till the boundary issue is resolved, demobilisation of armed forces take place from the border areas and no fresh or extended claims are made by the parties concerned. Both countries did try to resolve the dispute through talks or management of the border. Yet the progress has been tardy or the proposed solutions have not been satisfactory to the other party.

In 1960, both sides have conducted three talks in New Delhi, Beijing and Rangoon, with the latter placed as a reflection of British Indian inheritance of the McMahon Line by Burma. During this time, China had intensified discussions with Burma and soon settled the borders mainly with the intention of keeping that country away from the United States led Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation.

Incidentally, while the McMahon Line, drawn at the Shimla Conference in 1914 and initialled by Nationalist China's representative Chen Yifan, was mentioned as the LAC in the eastern sector by China's Premier Zhou Enlai in his 7 November, 1959 letter to India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the line up to which each side exercises actual control in the western sector. At the 1960 meeting between the two premiers at New Delhi, this position has been broadly reiterated by the Chinese side, with the emphasis from their perspective on the security of the highway from Xinjiang to Tibet built in 1954 to 1957. However, China's swap principle–that is India retaining areas south of McMahon Line while China retaining Aksai Chin–was not acceptable to the Indian leadership. Subsequent 1962 border clashes and China's military marching 20 kilometres inside India has had a huge impact in the subsequent cartographic changes.

The border clashes of 1962 were to freeze relations between India and China till the full diplomatic relations was restored in 1976. However, on the borders preliminary CBMs like flag meetings began as early as 1978 at Chushul in the western sector. Subsequently, the CBMs agreement of 1993 for the first time mentions about the LAC in a joint statement between the two countries.

Meanwhile, early 1980s triggered a second bout of discussions on the territorial dispute with eight talks in 1981 to 1987 period. Both parties tried to resolve the dispute with the first meeting deciding that an "immediate" resolution of the territorial dispute. However, since the 2nd border talks in 1982, China's side began using the words such as "ultimate" resolution of the dispute–indicating that the talks are going to be long-term and with focus on managing the borders rather than resolving them.

This has been the theme of the next round under the 15 Joint Working Group meetings from 1988 till 2005 when a Special Representative mechanism began to undertake the territorial security talks. 22 such meetings were held by December 2019. It is said to be a three phase talks under the guidelines of ten political parameters arrived at in 2005.

For instance, while the entire border from Karakoram ranges to Arunachal Pradesh spanned over 3,488 km, only a few parts of the border remain contentious. These include eight areas in the 1,680 km long Western sector of the border and include Pangong Tso, Trig Heights, Samar Lungpa, Demchok, Chushul, Depsang Bulge and in the last decade as well at Chumar in the Himachal-Uttarakhand borders. Chumar is considered to be an "extended claim" area as the Chinese never raised this dispute before. Also, while Galwan area has not been mentioned in the above areas of contention, both in 1962 and now that region have become contentious and violent.

The Middle Sector, which spans 545 km in length, has three areas in dispute, viz., Barahoti, Kauril and Shipki, although this sector is considered to be less contentious and in fact an informal agreement exists between the two countries in this sector.

The Eastern Sector is 1,126 km in length and has 6 areas in dispute, viz., Longju, Asaphila, Namka Chu, Samdurong Chu, Chantze and Migyutun. India emphasises on the McMahon Line in this sector, while the Chinese side had asked for concession in Tawang sector based on religious reasons of being the 16th century Dalai Lama's birthplace. Dai Bingguo, China's Special Representative said in 2017 that this concession is necessary for the dispute resolution. This is not acceptable to India as elected representatives have been coming from this area for long.

Also, like Galwan region, Sikkim region has been the place for some violent clashes as in 1967 Nathu La-Cho La-Jelep La incident where nearly 400 Chinese soldiers were killed. It is also the region where the Doklam incident happened in 2017 at the Bhutan-China border areas. Sikkim region was never considered to be a disputed region as the 1890 treaty with the Qing dynasty legitimised the borders, although it was never ratified by the respective legislatures.

Another feature that possibly explains the intransigence in resolving the territorial dispute lay in the bilateral equations, which were also influenced by geo-politics. For instance, areas in the western sector have been more contentious as these borders Afghanistan and Pakistan. China's "all-weather" friendship with Pakistan has been a major conditioning factor on China since the 1960s but also recently as China began its "flagship" programme of the recently launched Belt and Road Initiative with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as its mainstay since 2014.

At the bilateral level itself, there has been a wide divergence on the territorial limit definitions by both sides and the unwillingness to even exchange maps and finalise the dispute resolution. For instance, a Chinese note of 4 August, 1962 stated that the Indian side had established 27 military posts in the Chip Chap, Galwan and Shyok river valleys, although no coordinates are outlined. This note mentions about China providing to the Indian side in 1956 a map of delineation of the boundary between the two countries in the western sector. In reply, the August 8, 1962 note from the Indian side mentioned that the posts mentioned by the Chinese side are within the Indian territory and that these are for "purely defence purposes". However, the Indian note accused the Chinese side of intruding into the Indian territories and harassing the supply lines. Subsequently, the 22 August, 1962 Indian note protested against China setting up 18 new "aggressive" military posts "deep inside the Indian territory". It identified these 18 Chinese posts with longitude and latitude coordinates in Chip Chap, Galwan, Pangong Tso-Spangur and Qara Qash regions. These are in addition to the 9 posts it had established and as protested by the Indian note of 12 July, 1962.

The 22 August, 1962 Indian note decried "the continuing aggressive activities of the Chinese authorities in making wider boundary claims from time to time and getting the Chinese forces to follow these up by further intrusions into Indian territory. These varying claims have no relevance other than the fact that they illustrate Chinese expansionist aims in the area and the confusion prevailing in the minds of the Chinese Government as to the international frontier in the Ladakh region." This note further clarified the international boundary between the two countries as that which "runs from the Karakoram Pass along the watershed between the Shyok (belonging to the Indus system) and the Yarkand, and runs through the Qara Tagh Pass (Lon. 78° 20' East and Lat. 35° 43' North) to cross the eastern bend of the Qara Qash river (north west of Haji Langer) and to ascend the main Kuen Lun mountains. Thereafter, the boundary runs through the Yangi Pass (Long. 79° 25' East and Lat. 35° 55' North) along the crest of the mountains separating the Yurungkash basin from those of the lakes in Aksai Chin. It leaves the main crest of the Kuen Lun mountains at a point approximately Long. 80° 21' East and descends in a South-westerly direction, separating the basins of the Amtogor and Sarigh Jilganang lakes in India from those of Leighten and Tsoggar lakes in Tibet, down to Lanak Pass (Long. 79° 34' East and Lat. 34° 24' North)."

Finally, another dimension of the territorial security between India and China is the principles for resolving the dispute. Here as well, there is a wide discrepancy. India has argued for "fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable" solution to the dispute, although the 1962 Parliament resolution, in the aftermath of the border clashes mentioned about "every inch of land to be recovered". Also, for India lasting territorial security connotes mutual and equal security for each of the partners to the dispute. Given the geographical contours of the border–high Himalayan region–Indian contention is any demobilisation of forces has to consider the terrain into consideration rather than a mechanical interpretation of the geography.

China, on the other hand had suggested "mutual understanding, and mutual accommodation" as its priority which is not acceptable to India as the Chinese formulation has implications for the independent foreign policies.

To summarise the above discussion, India-China territories have witnessed an animated increase in the number of incidents recently such as border transgressions since the 1990s, Depsang Plains incident in 2013, Chumar incident in 2014 and 2015, Doklam incident in 2017 and currently the violent incidents at Galwan-Pangong Tso regions. Despite several decades of discussions on the border dispute and instituting of CBMs on the borders, recent events on military mobilisation and violent incidents suggest that these signals will have a large bearing not only in bilateral relations but also regional security. This then calls for resolving the territorial security issues between the two Asian giants for peace and stability in the continent. ❑

Multiple Choice Questions

On constant feedback from our readers preparing for various examinations, we are including this new section from the issue in hand. We hope that even those who read Yojana from policy and opinion perspective would also appreciate it. This might serve as a means to brush up awareness on the matters around in leisure time. Your views on this section are awaited. We, the Yojana Team, are always striving hard to bring the best to you from all spheres of life.

1. Which of the following are true for the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM)?

1. Mars Colour Camera onboard ISRO's MOM has recently captured the image of Phobos
2. Phobos is the closest and smallest moon of Mars.
3. The mission was launched on November 5, 2013, by PSLV-C25.
4. It entered the Martian orbit on September 24, 2014, in its first attempt.

(A) 1
(B) 1, 2, 3
(C) 1, 3, 4
(D) All of the above

2. Which of the following statements are valid for recent Solar Eclipses?

1. Solar Eclipse which occurred on 21 June 2020 was partial in nature
2. There is a ring of fire in annular eclipse
3. Annular eclipse happens when the moon is farthest from the earth

(A) 1
(B) 2, 3
(C) 1, 2
(D) All of the above

3. What is the new limit for investment of Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) in corporate bonds, as per the notification of the RBI?

(A) 10%
(B) 12%
(C) 15%
(D) 20%

4. Which country is to host the next FIFA World Cup in 2022?

(A) Greece
(B) Spain
(C) Italy
(D) Qatar

5. Which pharma company is the first in India to reach the trial stage for vaccine of COVID-19?

(A) Dr Reddy's
(B) Bharat Biotech
(C) CIPLA
(D) Sun Pharma

6. Sindhu Darshan venue is located in which of the following places?

(A) Haridwar
(B) Leh
(C) Prayagraj
(D) Rishikesh

7. The newly inaugurated COVID-19 facility in New Delhi has been named after which personality?

(A) Dr Rajendra Prasad
(B) Lal Bahadur Shastri
(C) Mahatma Gandhi
(D) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

8. Consider the following statements.

1. A severe cyclonic storm Nisarga affected the east-central and adjoining southeast Arabian Sea in June 2020.
2. Tropical cyclones/hurricanes/typhoons are always named after any particular person.
3. There are five tropical cyclone regional bodies worldwide.

Which of the statement/s is/are correct?

(A) 1
(B) 1,2
(C) 1, 3
(D) All of the above

9. A new category of awards announced as a part of Swachh Survekshan 2021 are:

(A) Swacchata Prahari Samman
(B) ODF Samman
(C) Prerak Dauur Samman
(D) Swacchta Prahari Samman

10. Who has taken over as Director General, Railway Health Services (DG RHS) Railway Board?

(A) Dr. Bishnu Prasad Nanda
(B) Dr Bishnu Parida
(C) Dr. Som Prakash
(D) Dr. B.P. Thakur

Answers Key : 1. (C), 2. (B), 3. (C), 4. (D), 5. (B), 6. (B), 7. (D), 8. (C), 9. (C), 10. (A)

Bengali Offbeat Cinema – After Satyajit Ray

Author – Bibekananda Ray

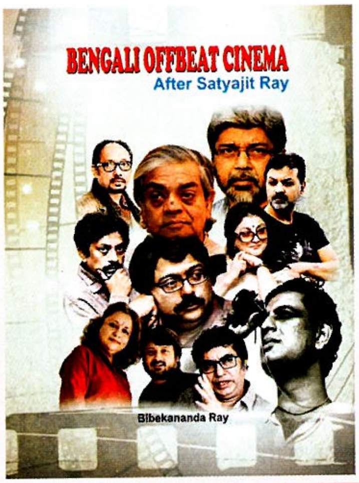
Details: This book talks of the Bengali Offbeat genre specially after the demise of Satyajit Ray.

ISBN - 978-81-230-3279-5, Price - Rs. 475/-

Satyajit Ray pioneered India's neo-realist cinema by directing 34 long and short features as well as five documentaries, 32 of them in Bengali. His debut in 1955, Pather Panchali ('The Song of the Road') blazed the trail of the genre in the country, became a global rave, subsequently, ranking among the ten best movies of all time, according to a 'Sight and Sound' poll. Did the genre that he pioneered and nourished for 36 long years end, or wilt after his death?

This title argues with ample data that on the contrary, the genre swelled further in the last 28 years with over 400 offbeat movies, made by younger generations charted new paths.

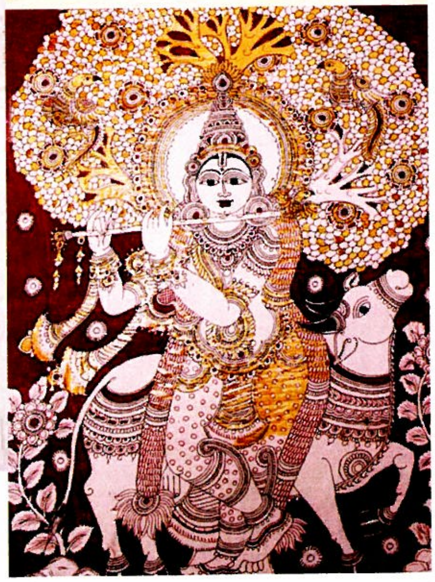
Bibekananda Ray, the author, chronicles Bengali offbeat cinema after Ray and presents a mine of information on the movies, their makers, producers, artistes, cinematographers, composers, singers, technological strides, scribes, government support, etc., since 1992. A retired Indian Information officer, Shri Ray, a film buff has also penned Conscience of the Race: India's Offbeat Cinema. ❑



KALEIDOSCOPE

Kalamkari- Andhra Pradesh

Sri Kalahasti near the temple town of Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh specializes in producing temple cloths-Kalamkari (lit. pen-work) - primarily used for their temple festivals or as wall hangings. The stories from the epics Ramayan, Mahabharat and the Puranas are painted as continuous narratives, each important event framed in a rectangle. The master craftsman draws the outline of the design with Kalam or pen on the myrobalan treated cloth using charcoal sticks made from tamarind wood. He draws from the rich repertoire of design and motifs and iconographical details of various Gods and Goddesses as laid down traditionally.



The colors are obtained from vegetable and mineral sources The main colors used are black, red, blue and yellow and alum is used as a mordant to fix the colors and to obtain the reds. The gods are painted blue, the demons and evil characters in red and green. Yellow is used for female figures and ornaments. Red is mostly used as a background. The cotton cloth is washed in flowing water to remove starch and between dyeing and bleaching. ❑

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat
ఒకే భారతదేశం శ్రేష్ఠ భారతదేశం
एकं भारतं श्रेष्ठं भारतम्
এক ভাৰত শ্ৰেষ্ঠ ভাৰত
एक भारत श्रेष्ठ भारत
ഏക് ഭാരത് ശ്രേഷ്ഠ ഭാരതം
એક ભારત શ્રેષ્ઠ ભારત
एक भारत श्रेष्ठ भारत
ഏകഭാരതം ശ്രേഷ്ഠം ഭാരതം
ಒಂದೇ ಭಾರತ ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಭಾರತ
ஒன்றே பாரதம், ஒப்பிலா பாரதம்
অনন্য ভারত মহান ভারত
इक भारत श्रेष्ठ भारत

The idea of a sustained and structured cultural connect between denizens of different regions was mooted by the Prime Minister on Rashtriya Ekta Divas in 2015, to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He propounded that cultural diversity is a joy that ought to be celebrated through mutual interaction & reciprocity between people of different States and UTs so that a common spirit of understanding resonates throughout the country.

एक भारत श्रेष्ठ भारत

Every State and UT in the country is paired with another State/UT for a year, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc. The paired States/UTs signed MoUs with each other, delineating a set of activities that they would carry out. An activity calendar for each pair was prepared through mutual consultation, paving the way for a year long process of mutual engagement. Such interaction between different segments of the population of each pair of States /UTs at the cultural level, generated the vibrance of understanding & appreciation amongst the people and forge mutual bonding, thus securing an enriched value system of unity in the nation.

It has been decided to take forward the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme of the Government by using innovative ways in view of the prevailing conditions of COVID-19. Institutions under Ministry of Tourism are organising webinars on various aspects of tourism. The ministry is doing a series of webinars under the series "Dekho Apna Desh", being hosted on MyGov portal. These webinars are being attended by thousands of people. It has also been proposed to develop E-Heritagepedia and E-Artistpedia and that renowned artists can do virtual programme modules to teach their art. My Gov.in is developing a Mobile App for learning 100 sentences in different languages.

The broad objectives of the initiative are as follows:

1. **To CELEBRATE** the Unity in Diversity of our Nation and to maintain and strengthen the fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the people of our country;
2. **To PROMOTE** the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian States and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between States;
3. **To SHOWCASE** the rich heritage and culture, customs and traditions of either State for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity;
4. **TO ESTABLISH** long-term engagements and,
5. **TO CREATE** an environment which promotes learning between States by sharing best practices and experiences. ☐

YOJANA WEB EXCLUSIVES

On the request of our readers who wish to publish their articles in Yojana but are unable to find a place due to paucity of space in the print version, we have extended a platform in form of 'Yojana Web Exclusives'. We invite original and well-informed articles on varied subjects and domains from our readers. The curated articles will find a space on our website with credits to the author.

Email: yojanace@gmail.com